PAUL THE DAUNTLESS

THE COURSE OF A GREAT ADVENTURE

BASIL MATHEWS

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PAUL THE DAUNTLESS

THE COURSE OF A GREAT ADVENTURE

BY

BASIL MATHEWS, M.A.

NEW YORK CHICAGO TORONTO

Fleming H. Revell Company

LONDON AND EDINBURGH

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FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY

Printed in the United States of America

New York: 158 Fifth Avenue
Chicago: 17 N. Wabash Ave.
London: 21 Paternoster Square
Edinburgh: 75 Princes Street

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INTRODUCTION

IT was at night, on the deck of a ship in the Eastern Mediterranean and watching the masts swing dizzily across the face of the moon, that I first had the feeling of really beginning to know Paul.

The stars above were the same that he had watched as he sailed for Cyprus on his first adventure. There was the lift and fall of the same sea, the same splash of water from the plunging bows; the same stir of the fresh night breeze that had cooled his temples. In a strange, intimate way Paul seemed to be standing there looking westward over the rail—just as he stood with Barnabas when they headed for Cyprus.

So, during the long journey in Paul's footsteps, we felt every day that we could see him more clearly. We walked in Tarsus, the city where he was born; and saw boys repeating the verses that he learned there. With him we watched the tawny river Cydnus run from the white mountains of Taurus through the great plain down to the shimmering sea.

From Jerusalem, where, as an undergraduate, he sat at the feet of Gamaliel, we followed him to Cæsarea, where the foundations of the great Roman citadel in which Paul stood before Felix and Festus still defy the breakers of the Mediterranean, and to Damascus, where you can still walk under the Roman arch through the city wall that led him into the Street

called Straight, and watch the tent-maker at work in the bazaar.

We walked the beach of Salamis, where he landed on the island of Cyprus, and watched the sailing boats creep out of the little old harbour at Paphos, whence he sailed to Pamphylia. We climbed the glorious grey gorges of the Taurus mountains and shared with Paul the awful silence and solitude of the Cilician Gates. To do this and to go beyond the Taurus on to the high plateau, and all day—and day after day—to follow in his steps, side by side with the soft-footed camels, from Iconium to Lystra and thence to Derbe, westward to Antioch in Pisidia and on and on to Ephesus, was to begin to understand a little of the matchless power and patience of this hero of "the forward tread."

Sailing from Smyrna to Athens, the glory of a purple sunset in the Ægean Sea—

"as it were a glassy sea mingled with fire"—

the deathless beauty of the Parthenon and all the majesty of the Acropolis, still spread themselves for us as they did long ago for him. Yet more wonderful than the Parthenon itself is the majestic temple of Paul's thought—so lofty, so spacious, so glorious in its beauty and dazzling in its daring. These swift-racing, passionate letters of his seemed as though the ink on them was hardly dry—so fresh they were—as we read them on the vast plain of the Galatian cities, in the valley going down to Ephesus, on the great hill over Corinth.

We stood on the quay at Puteoli, where he landed

in Italy, and, passing along the Appian Way, entered Rome with him, and walked the corridors of Nero's Golden House and the Forum. Nor can one tread unmoved the road where Paul strode bravely out to the block and sword of the executioner.

The frightful power of a snow blizzard in the mountain pass over Antioch, the smiting heat of the blazing sun on the beach at Corinth where the blue water has the wiles of a beautiful witch, gave us a still deeper reverence for the sturdy, dauntless daring of this man who was tossed in tempest, drenched with rains, and burned in the summer heat; smitten with fever, robbed, stoned, beaten, and wrecked; and, still undaunted, went on to declare, as he ran his race in the Stadium of the Roman world

"I press on toward the goal, unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

. . . . . .

This life of Paul the Tarsian has been written after I had taken these journeys personally, and having read books in which the life of Paul, the truth of the book of Acts, and the Pauline authorship of the Letters is discussed, and after having studied the life of the Roman Empire round the Mediterranean in the time of Paul and Nero.[1]

Everything stated in the book I believe to be historically true and accurate in detail. The life of Saul in Tarsus, for instance, is built up of details which must inevitably have happened to a Jewish boy living in Tarsus at that time; and from a reconstruc-

[1] See Bibliography for list of books.

tion of Roman Tarsus itself based on reading, observation, and conversations on the spot. But I should have no confidence, even then, in hoping for this historical accuracy had not Dr. Bartlet, of Mansfield College, Oxford, read the whole book and given most valuable criticism and suggestion, while Dr. Christie, of Tarsus; Dr. Masterman, of Jerusalem; Canon Hanauer and Dr. Frank Mackinnon, of Damascus; Dr. Dodd, of Konia (Iconium); and Miss Kathopathakes, of Athens, have contributed priceless assistance with regard to the places where their knowledge is so intimate and authoritative. Sir William Ramsay, D.C.L., the greatest of our archæological authorities, has given most generous guidance, both in my travel in Asia Minor and in regard to difficult points in the narrative. He has added to these kindnesses by his permission to reproduce a drawing and his Chronology of the life of Paul. Dr. Moffat has kindly permitted extensive quotations from his vivid and authoritative translation of the New Testament. Miss Rawle has with great kindness made the Index. I wish to express gratitude to these and to others who have given notable help, particularly the Revs. W. H. Findlay, M.A., and J. Shaw Griffith, M.A.

Thus guided, we shall in this book try to go in the footsteps of Paul. It will not be all easy travelling for any of us, to journey with this daring explorer of the Unseen; there is some steep hill-climbing, some scrambling over boulders, long flat tramps over the plain, and dangerous sea-journeys for anyone who will attempt really to follow the life of this man whose eager brain was ever

"Voyaging on strange seas of thought
Alone!"

But, if you will (as we sing at school) "Follow up, follow up," trudge by him till you really know him, you will have found for yourself one of the great companions of the world.

BASIL MATHEWS.

Thrice was I beaten with (Roman) rods,
Once was I stoned,
Thrice I suffered shipwreck,
A night and a day have I been in the deep;
In journeyings often,
In perils of rivers, in perils of robbers,
In perils from my race, in perils from the Gentiles,
In perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness,
In perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;
In labour and travail, in watchings often,
In hunger and thirst, in fastings often,
In cold and nakedness.

The Second Letter to the Corinthians,
chapter xi, verses 25-27.

PROLOGUE

THE PATH OF THE STORKS

THE PATH OF THE STORKS

A BOY stood, one spring morning, on the quay-side below the great city where he lived.

His ears and eyes were full of the strange music and colour of the life of a busy harbour. The sing-song chant of the sailors as they pulled the ropes through the creaking pulleys; the swing of bales of goat's hair cloth from the quay, and the thud as they dropped into the hold of the ship; the discontented grunt of a tawny camel as the stuffed sacks were lifted from the quay-side and lashed on his back; the splash and gleam of oars in the water as a boat put across the harbour, breaking the reflections of ships and masts into a thousand ripples—all made him throb with that desire which tingles in a boy as he watches ships go down to the sea.

The hunger for wider horizons, the blind craving for the sting of the salt of the sea, and the sight of land at dawn, burnt in the boy like a fever.

A white, swiftly passing reflection in the water startled him out of his dream, and lifting his oval Jewish face he saw strange birds sailing across the blue sky. They flew northward from the sea over the harbour and the city of Tarsus with slow movements of their great white wings. Their long necks were stretched forward toward the snow-covered Taurus mountain-range. Their still longer legs trailed behind them, like the wake of a ship in the sea.

"Now the storks have come there will be no more rain and storm," he would hear the sailors say as they scrubbed and tarred their ships, bending new sails and reeving fresh rope in last year's frayed rigging. For spring was in the air. The Great Sea which had been closed to the ships through all the stormy winter days was open again, and the busy sea-life of the Mediterranean was to begin again.

"The storks! Where do they come from? Where are they flying to? Why do they go in the springtime?"

The questions which any boy as eager and keen as young Saul of Tarsus would ask filled his mind as he walked back along the riverside homeward. The river was running full, for the snows were melting in the mountains and the waters were running into the lake-harbour below Tarsus and then out between the banks down to the sparkling sea. At last he reached home, and his bearded father would have to rack his brain for everything that he could remember about the storks.

So young Saul learned that the storks came from far, far away South, moved by an inner Voice which called them to the mountains and seas of the North. All up the long valley of the Jordan they had flown, and on the edge of the Syrian desert they had halted to feed on the snails, the grasshoppers, and the locusts. When they had rested, rising again heavily in the air, they floated over the orchards and thousand roofs of Damascus, and the white under their black wings reflected the Lebanon snows. Flying on and on, across the gulf and the great plain of Cilicia, they were now

over Saul's home in Tarsus itself. Some would stay there and would rest and lay eggs, hatching out in the early summer their quaint, downy, long-legged young.

But most of them would fly across Tarsus still northward with tireless wings, rising from the Cilician plain to the hills, and then from the hills to the grim mountain-ravines of Taurus, down which the tumbling cascades plunged to join the Cydnus river running through Tarsus to the sea. Over green pine and grey peak, higher and always higher the storks rose till the narrow rock-gateway—the Cilician Gates—took them into its shadow and they came out again in the broader valleys north of the Taurus range.

The storks would hear beneath them the sound of running water which filled all the valleys and the slow ting-ting of the bells that swayed with the camels that strode along the winding road. Sometimes the cry of a driver would shatter the quiet, the crack of his whip and the clatter of horses' hoofs on the stones, as the Roman post rode through the pass, bearing the orders of the Emperor to his proconsuls and generals.

The storks could not stop, for the inner Voice which drove them northward in the spring still burned in them. They passed, and still rising, launched out of the mountains on to the high wind-swept plateau of Anatolia. The great tableland lay in the sunshine—spread out under them from mountain to mountain. And still the Great Road stretched forward, league upon league, North and West, beyond the reach even of the eyes of the birds.

The long empty reaches of the road were broken here by a line of quiet Pilgrim Jews on their way South-East to the hills of Jerusalem, there by a caravan of camels taking wool to Tarsus, and a medley of laden trotting asses. Under the shelter of a hill the homely sheds of a rest-house for the drivers and their beasts made the awful treeless distances less desolate.

Below them the storks heard the tramp of Roman legionaries marching out to quell a wild, turbulent tribe that had hung its defiant little village among the Pisidian peaks to the South; and the ring of hammer upon stone where a gang of slaves were laying a stretch of Roman road between Iconium and Lystra. The swift flight of the birds mocked the slow crawl of oxen crossing and re-crossing the ploughed land. The bleat of kids and lambs to their mothers, as the flocks of sheep and herds of goats nibbled their way toward the solitary well, came up to the storks as they swept along their unseen Path in the air.

But the Voice within, that had sent them North, would not let the birds pause till a broken coast, dotted with gleaming cities and fringed with foam, lay under their spread of wing. The East was now behind them. They had reached the Ægean Sea. But they could not furl their wings and rest, unspurred by the Voice, till the sea and its islands had been crossed and the winds of Macedonia stirred among their breast feathers.

. . . . . .

The Voice that spurred the storks was the Voice that spoke in the boy on the harbour-side at Tarsus—

as He speaks to all boys. The desire to range with the birds had broken out within him. He felt

> "A sting that bids
> Nor sit, nor stand—but go."

the yearning to sail new seas and to feel the mountain-road under his feet.

. . . . . .

So it was to be. The storks had followed that Unseen Path in the air from South to North, from Nile and Jordan to Danube, through all the ages—as they follow it to-day. On the Great Road under them—the road that lies like a bridge from Europe to Asia—Alexander the Great had swept with his swarming armies, creeping over the plain and storming through the Cilician Gates, to pour like a river in full flood over the Cilician Plain and down through the hills of Syria.

Down the same road Cyrus had ridden with his Ten Thousand,[1] the conquerors of the West seeking to put their heel on the bowed neck of the East. Up the kingly Road on the plateau Xerxes had cantered westward, the head of the might of Persian power—the wave of Asia breaking vainly on the rocky coast of Europe. And now, in the days of the Boy of Tarsus, the Road echoed to the thunders of the legions of Rome. She, the Mistress of the World, had planted her armies along the Road, and held the plateau, the mountains, and the plains by the sea, in the grip of her strong hand.

[1] Xenophon; Anabasis.

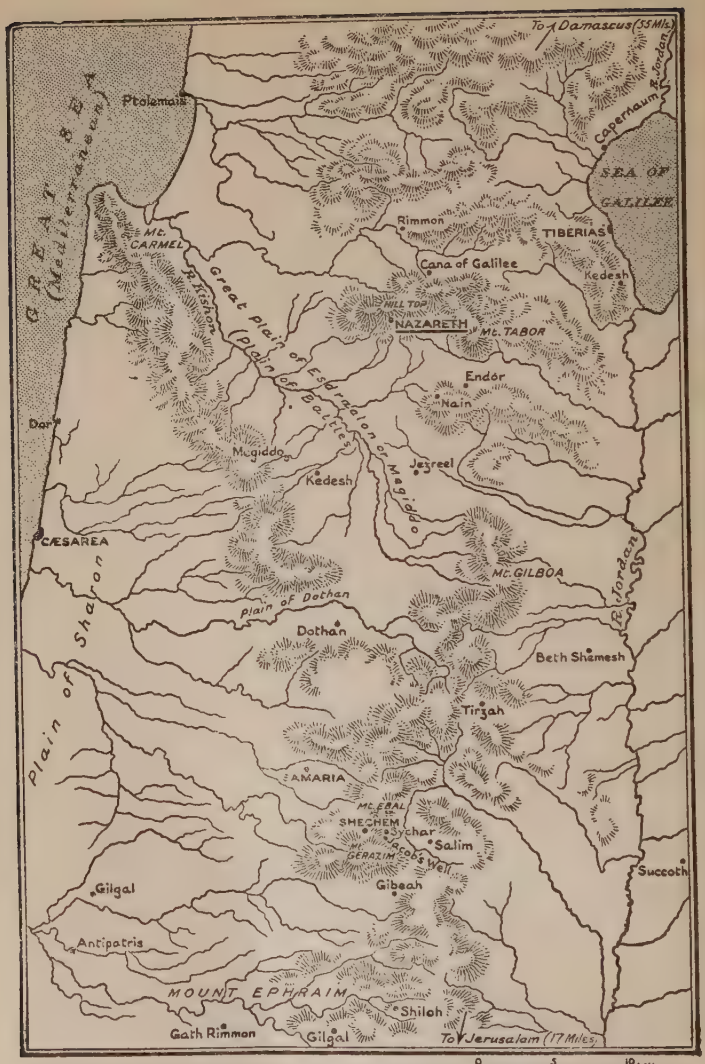
The boy Saul was to feel this same Road under his eager feet. The blood of the East throbbed in his Jewish veins, and the pride of birth as a Roman citizen burned in his brain, while he spoke in the swift speech of Greece. So he was the child both of the East and West. And he was to follow the great Path of the Storks, the Road of Conquest, from Judæa to Damascus, and through Antioch to Tarsus, over by the Cilician Gates and all along that high tableland to the broken Ægean coast. Nor was he to furl the wings of his desire till he had swept across the Ægean to face the learning of Athens and dare the pride of Rome.

It was to be a very great Adventure—the life of this boy who stood at the quay-side at Tarsus watching the storks. It was to be more. For the kings of the East and the West—Alexander and Cyrus and Xerxes—who had fought and marched on that Road, had passed; their victories were lost, and their empires crumbled.

But Paul's Adventure, stoned though he was and beaten, robbed and imprisoned, shipwrecked and slain, was to issue in a conquest that would stand when Rome had fallen;—in an Empire covering both East and West—whose armies would some day march beyond even the Path of the Storks at the command of a King who was crowned with a Crown of Thorns.

BOOK I

IN TRAINING



FROM THE NAZARETH HILL CREST

I

THE TRIBE OF THE YOUNGEST SON

"WHAT shall we call him?"

The question that all the mothers in the world have asked would leap to this mother's lips as the father stooped to take his first look at his baby son.

The father was proud that he himself belonged to the Tribe of the Youngest Son—the tribe that gave the first warrior-king to his nation. All the hot passion for his country and people would burn in him as he thought of his own tribe of Benjamin—and how, out of that

"smallest of the tribes of Israel,"

and

"from the least of all the families of the tribe,"

the great soldier-king Saul had been chosen to be the first monarch they ever had—

"a young man and a goodly . . . from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people."

If only this boy, this baby here, might grow up to stand erect like Saul, a king among the people! In any case he should bear the name of the king of the Tribe of the Youngest Son.

"We will call him 'Saul,'" said the father.

Saul was his first name, the name his father and mother would use at home. "Saul" was the name they spoke to the priest when he was carried—a baby only eight days old—to the synagogue where the priest took a knife and made that cut which all Jewish baby boys were to bear to separate them from the other nations on the earth.

Through the little window, high up in the wall, which let the sunlight into the cool, quiet room where the mother and the boy lay, the sounds of the city floated in—the slow tinkle of the bells on the silent, passing camels which had come down the pass through the mountains to Tarsus and were carrying their loads down to the harbour-quay; the hoarse cry of the drivers; the quick, light steps of the droves of laden donkeys, the laughter of the University students as they strolled down to the gymnasium by the river, the clink of the armour of the passing Roman soldier.

Saul's father did not need that last sound to remind him of something of which he was almost as proud as he was of his own sonship in the tribe of Benjamin; that he was a Roman citizen, a citizen, especially, of the far-spreading Roman free city of Tarsus. His young son, who, when he grew up, would be able to say,

"Civis Romanus sum,"

must, therefore, have a Roman as well as a Jewish name. They gave him for his Roman name—"Paul."

. . . . . .

While the baby Saul was learning to walk, another

Jewish Boy—far away southward and across the sea —was growing up in a village among the hills. Barefoot and bareheaded, with a linen tunic girdled at the waist, He ran in and out of the carpenter's workshop where Joseph made ploughs and yokes for the oxen of Nazareth. And He trotted alongside His mother as she walked to the village well, balancing the earthenware water-pot upon her head.

Saul of Tarsus, the city-boy, and Jesus, the peasant's Son, of Nazareth, were as different from one another as boys could be. And, so far as we can know, they never met one another before the death of Jesus. Yet even at the beginning of the life of Saul we must think of Jesus. For a day was to be when the coming of Jesus into the life of Saul was to change the whole history of the world.

II

THE LOOM OF THE TENT-MAKER

THE dark-haired boy, Saul, as he grew up, took in with his swift brain and quick eyes the wonderful life of the city in which he lived.

Tarsus stretched across a great plain, through which a winding river ran, from dark, snow-rimmed mountains, down to the shining sea. From the mountains of Taurus—and from the great high plain up behind the mountains—long caravans of dusty, stealthy-footed camels came striding down, bearing on their backs wool and lead and silver ore and many other things from the North and West. From the lands of the rising sun other camels came, bearing silks and spices, and led by dark, swarthy Arabs.

Up from the Great Sea—as they called the Mediterranean—the ships sailed into the lake-harbour, bringing glass from Sidon and purple cloths from Tyre, copper from the island of Cyprus and marbles from Italy and Greece. On the ships were ruddy-faced men from the West, dark, bronze-featured sailors from the Nile, and skilful seamen of Phœnician blood from the Palestine coast.

Saul would see these things in company with other boys; for in him the instinct that makes boys get together in groups was stronger than usual. All through his life he was very eager for companionship.

Yet sometimes the boys would quarrel, we may be quite sure; Saul had a keen, quick temper which caught fire swiftly and would blaze into clean anger. But we know that sullenness was a thing he did not understand. When he quarrelled with any of his friends he soon made it up again.

He would go as a boy, then—sometimes with other boys, sometimes with his father—in and out among the streets of Tarsus, dodging out of the way of the swinging camels and of the wide horns of the black buffaloes dragging their lumbering wagons along.

Each shop along the streets was just a square platform, closed on three sides and open at the front, where the cobbler sat sewing the shoes—red or black, just as you wished—and the tall moccasin-boots which he sold. The coppersmith hammered his pans; and the silversmith, working his tiny bellows, heated the grey silver in the forge and tapped it on his little anvil. The saddle-maker cut and sewed his leather trappings for the horses and the camels. The potter's hands moulded the whirling clay—this piece to a lovely vase, that to a common household pan—but all to some use.

The click and swish of the loom as the weaver threw the shuttle across and back again like lightning held Saul most of all. For this was to be part of the trade he, himself, was to learn.

A great Jewish rabbi said,

"The father who does not teach his son a trade makes him as a thief,"

and another teacher, whose words passed from mouth to mouth, declared,

> "The father who teaches his son a trade makes him like a vineyard fenced around."

Whether Saul's father was rich or poor he would, as a good Jew, teach his boy a trade. The most famous trade in all Tarsus was making the tents under which the wandering shepherd-peoples on the plain and among the hills could shelter. They were long, low tents supported by a number of poles and with the edges of the canvas held to the ground with tent-pegs.

Miles away, up in the hills, near the great mountains, in the suburb of Tarsus, where Saul and his sister and mother and father went in the summer, he saw the long-haired goats of this land of Cilicia. The hair of these goats was used by the tent-makers to weave into the tent-cloth. For it kept the rain off the backs of the goats and therefore was good, when made into thick canvas, for keeping the rain out of the tent.

Young Saul was taught how to make the tents; first he learned how the thread was spun from the goat-hair, then how these threads were strung from beam to beam on the loom, and the shuttles were shot from side to side till the threads were woven into a cloth. After that the pieces of cloth were sewn tightly together to make one great canvas; and twisted goat-hair ropes were fixed to the edges, all looped ready for the tent-pegs.

Faster than the swiftest weaver in all Tarsus could throw his shuttles or rattle his loom, the brain of the

boy Saul worked. He saw the weaver throwing the different coloured threads—purple, green, and yellow —across his cloth; and Saul's own mind had three different threads to weave into the wonderful pattern of his mind. As the coloured threads in the weaver's loom flashed to and fro till the eye could not follow, so the three threads of this boy's life—Jewish, Greek, and Roman—crossed and re-crossed till they were all blended in one wonderful pattern in the brain of this boy—the mind that was to become one of the swiftest, most daring, and yet tenderest that have ever lived.

I. THE THREAD OF THE CENTURIES

The first thread was the rich long thread of the story of his own people. It glowed through his mind like a lovely purple thread in a king's mantle, woven on the loom of the centuries.

Saul spun the thread as he sat in the dim light of the synagogue, and saw them take up the sacred rolls and opening them read out of the Law and the Prophets; and as he squatted on the sand-strewn floor of the school and shouted out the stories he had learned from memory. But most of all this thread would come from the story-times at home.

Saul's mother, when she had ground the corn into meal and made the dough for the thin flat loaves of bread which she baked in the mud oven, and as she sat spinning while they waited for his father to come back from the market-place, would tell him the stories of his nation. They were tales to make a boy's eyes grow round and shining with wonder, stories to make him

catch his breath with excitement as to whether the Shepherd Boy or the Giant would win in the fight. Her tales were his picture-book—the greatest book of adventure in the world.

Through her eyes, Saul saw the old patriarchs riding on their camels along the horizon of the old, old times and pitching their low, black tents by the side of the springs of water. He shivered as he watched the uplifted knife of Abraham ready to slay his son Isaac, and breathed again when the ram's horns were caught in the thicket and the boy Isaac was free.

He heard how Rebekah watered the thirsty camels at the fountain and rode under the blazing sky into the land to meet Isaac, and how her sons Esau and Jacob quarrelled and were friends again. He could see Jacob terrified because the coat of many colours belonging to his favourite son Joseph was brought to him all dabbled with blood; when, all the while, young Joseph had been thrown into a pit by his brothers. For the brothers were tired of his dreams of being greater than they, and sold him to the slave-dealers; who had carried him off with their camel caravan into Egypt.

The most exciting part of the stories—young Saul would feel—began where the tale of the Father of his own tribe came—when Benjamin, the youngest son of Jacob, went down as a boy to Egypt. There all the brothers saw Joseph, but did not know him, for he had become the greatest man—next to Pharaoh—in all the land; until (unable to hold himself in any longer) Joseph told them who he was.

Saul's hot temper would flame up in him, and his

heart would go throbbing with anger when he heard how the Israelites—after Joseph died—were lashed with long-thonged whips by the cruel Egyptian task-masters under a new Pharaoh. But his eyes sparkled again as he saw the little Moses, first hidden as a baby in the bulrushes, and then growing up to lead his own people out of Egypt away across the Red Sea, with the chariots of Pharaoh galloping in vain behind them.

The story of those days in the desert was told him and the long, weary wanderings of the people in their tents, till, on the great hills over Jordan, they looked across and saw the new land in which they were to live—the land from which young Saul's own father and mother had come.

"What was the law that Moses left for us to obey?" the mother would ask, and the boy would repeat the words that every Jewish boy learns as soon as he can speak.

"Hear, O Israel:
The Lord our God is one Lord:
And thou shalt love the Lord, thy God:
With all thine heart;
And with all thy soul,
And with all thy might."

Saul came to know by heart, also, how Joshua led them all across Jordan and conquered the land, how Samson carried off the gates of Gaza and smote the Philistines, and how, at last, blinded and chained, he thrust out the giant pillars and hurled the great house and its three thousand insolent feasters into ruin.

The boy Saul would enjoy those fierce stories, but

his mother would rather tell about the boy in the temple who waited on Eli, and she would very much wish that her boy might come to be like young Samuel. We can well believe that Saul himself would prefer those about his own namesake, whom Samuel had anointed king. Would he ever grow as tall as that great warrior-king Saul who stood head and shoulders above the others and led all the people in the great fights in the valleys and on the hills against the Philistines?

We can imagine him measuring himself against the wall to see whether he was growing tall, and then running back to hear how David killed the lion and the bear and the giant Goliath, and, after Saul died, became king in Jerusalem.

And now (young Saul's father told him) Jerusalem and all the land was under the hand of the Romans. Their old country did not belong to them. But One was coming (and their eyes burned like gleaming coals with a fire of hate and of hope as they said it)—a King —sent by God, who would roll back all the enemies of the Jews—a Leader who would save them. They must wait, and be ready when the hour came—when He the Messiah Prince that was to be would call them out to fight.

In all the stories and every day, whether walking with his father, or sitting on the house-top with his mother, or listening in the synagogue, he would hear these words,

> "To love the Lord your God
> And to serve Him with all your heart,
> And with all your soul."

They were written on parchment and put in little leather cases strapped on the foreheads of the men, and on the arms of the growing boys, and were written on the door-posts.

On the fringe of Saul's coat was a cord of blue. If any Greek boy in Tarsus had asked him why it was there Saul would have answered at once from memory:

> "Put upon the fringe of each border a cord of blue:
> And it shall be unto you for a fringe,
> That ye may look upon it,
> And remember all the commandments of the Lord,
> And do them."

This great invisible God could not be shown in the likeness of an image—a statue of marble like those in the Greek temple which Saul passed on his way to school.

Once every year he would see the streets of Tarsus all alive with crowds waiting for a great procession to pass. If he was allowed to watch he would see a great canopy over the image of a god who was being taken to be burned—for the god of the Tarsians was burned each year in the belief that he would come into immortal life again through the fire. Saul had been taught to scorn such a superstition about an idol. When he ran home to tell his father about the gorgeous procession, his father would surely frown and remind Saul to repeat his

> "Hear, O Israel. The Lord thy God is one God."

So Saul learned that all the great kings and leaders, the warriors and the prophets, Moses and Joshua, Samuel and Saul, David and Solomon, had been great

and powerful only when they obeyed the commandments of God. And when the story of the downfall of his own namesake King Saul was told to him they would say simply, "He disobeyed God and God rejected him."

So the boy thought of God as One and Eternal and All-Powerful, very just and stern with those who disobeyed Him; yet merciful to those who were sorry for their disobedience. And he waited for the new King who was to come to free his people. And he grew to be very keen about all the thousand and one special religious observances that made the Jews feel themselves to be the people of God.

This was the first and longest and richest thread that flashed to and fro in the loom of Saul's life, and was woven into the woof of his very being. But it was only the first.

II. THE THREAD OF BEAUTY

As Saul went down to the water's edge with his companions he would see young men in white tunics and sandals mooring their boats and then running up wide marble steps. At the top they joined other youths who were chatting among the great gleaming pillars, some of them rubbing oil into their glistening bare bodies.

From within came the sound of cheering, the panting of wrestlers straining to throw one another, the ring of the thrown javelin on the pavement. Then a team of students would run down the steps and, diving

into the water, race one another in a swim up-stream and back again.

In a quieter place among the further pillars in the shade, a group had settled round an older man. Some stood, leaning against the white pillars; others sat on the pavement. Nearly all had tablets of wax in the left hand and an ivory style in the right, ready to put down some witty saying or wise idea of the Greek tutor. Then they would argue—and questions and answers would fly to and fro more swiftly than arrows in a battle.

If Saul were near enough to hear what the tutor was saying he would be almost sure to hear the words, "Athenodorus said," followed by some great maxim, which the students would quickly scribble down on their tablets. Athenodorus had died at Tarsus just about the time when Saul was born, and he was the most wonderful teacher in the world in his day. Indeed, some of the things Saul wrote when he was a man are so similar to the sayings of Athenodorus that the boy Saul may have learned them first from some pupil of Athenodorus himself in Tarsus.

Partly because of Athenodorus the fame of this Tarsus university was spreading through all the Mediterranean. And Saul would be able to talk to the students of the University because—although he spoke the Aramaic language of the Hebrews to his father and mother at home, and his strict father would not like him to mix too much with people who were not Jews—yet he talked Greek, and indeed, even read the Law and the Prophets in a Greek translation.[1]

[1] A translation of Old Testament called the Septuagint, because (it was said) seventy men helped to translate it.

Greek was the language in which men of different races talked to one another in Tarsus. This seems strange to us, because Tarsus is a thousand miles from Greece. But as many as two thousand years before Saul was born, Greek sailors, coming along the coast all the way from the Ægean Sea, had sailed up the Cydnus River and settled at Tarsus, and had traded in the silver and lead which men mined in the mountains. Assyrian armies and Persian had swept across the plain from the East and had conquered Tarsus, but still the Greeks remained there.

When Saul went with his father to buy a new pair of sandals the money which he gave to the cobbler had Greek letters all round it.

Saul would be told as a boy by the Tarsians, who were very proud of the history of their city, that over three hundred years before young Alexander the Great, the Greek Emperor, had covered the plain and filled the city with his great armies. He had nearly killed himself in this very river by leaping in all hot when the water was bitterly cold with the melted snow from the white Taurus mountains.

The Greeks carved beautiful statues which Saul's father would hate because a good Jew would think of them as idols. They also went into training for sports, while, at the same time, training their brains to be swift and agile. The Jews trained their boys to glory in the past rather than think out new ideas, and to think more of the life of the spirit than of the body and mind. The Greeks taught their boys to think new thoughts, and they liked quickness of mind and witty speaking better than a wonderful memory or deep,

wise, old proverbs. The wonder of Saul was that he remembered the old like a Jew, but created new and adventurous thoughts more swiftly than even the Greek.

Sitting there at the water's edge, Saul would spy, among the boats sailing up and down the broad river, some with strange figures painted on them—sometimes a Ram, or a pair of Scales, or the Sun God Apollo. These he knew were Greek boats painted with signs to bring the sailors good luck. His brooding eyes would follow the boat as it sailed down under the evening breeze. His adventurous mind would sail leagues beyond the boat to the islands and mountains from which the Greeks came; where temples were reflected in the sea.

But the boy Saul on the river bank would not imagine that, just because he knew the Greek language, he would some day be able to make wonderful journeys such as no man of his race had ever taken before, and not only to speak so that the people of that day in scores of cities from Jerusalem to Rome might hear him, but to write so that we and millions of others to-day and in all the days to come can share his wonderful story and listen to his great secret.

The lovely Greek thread was woven to and fro in the pattern of Saul's mind. It gleamed like gold, as it lay intertwined with the rich thread of the story of his own Jewish people. There was a third thread—not so beautiful as these, but very strong—the imperial thread of Rome.

III. THE THREAD OF EMPIRE

"When I was a boy," one of the oldest sailors on the quay at Tarsus would begin—and we can imagine the boy Saul with others standing round waiting for the yarn.

"When I was a boy, and Mark Antony, the Roman ruler, lived up yonder at the palace, the Queen of Egypt came to Tarsus through the harbour here. Never was such a ship in all the world. The barge she sat in seemed to burn on the water. The poop was covered with beaten gold, and the oars were shining silver that flashed as they dipped and rose in the river, keeping time to the playing of flutes. The sails were purple. And on the deck on a couch lay Cleopatra the Queen, with boys standing by fanning her, and with maids in attendance.

"You could not see the harbour here for people. Everyone in Tarsus came out. The house-tops, the quays, and the boats all were covered with them."

We can imagine that one of the boys fresh from school would ask:

"Do the Romans rule in Egypt where Cleopatra came from as they do here?"

And many a sailor in Tarsus harbour would be able to say:

"Yes, I have sailed for many a year up and down the Great Sea and never have I dropped anchor where the Romans do not rule. I have sailed from here down the Syrian coast, to Tyre and Sidon and Cæsarea, and across there to Cyprus; right away down to Alexandria in Egypt, where the great corn-ships

anchor, and across from the Nile to Syracuse in Sicily. I have sailed from Brundisium[1] up the Gulf of Corinth and seen my ship dragged across the rollers to drop again into the gulf that leads to Athens. From Athens I have sailed to Ephesus and round the coast to Rhodes and back to Tarsus. And everywhere—everywhere you see the power of Rome ruling."

And then the old sailor would not have told all, for he would not know that, when the great general Julius Cæsar sailed for Tarsus, nearly half a century before Paul was born, he had already begun the conquest of a savage island called Britain, in the North Sea far beyond the Alps.

Saul, as he went back home, would pass the many-pillared porticoes of stately Roman temples. As he got into the heart of the city again, he might see the road swiftly cleared at the sound of the wild clatter of horses' hoofs on the paved way. As the panting beasts, flecked with white sweat, swept by on the last mile of their long gallop down from the mountains, he would know that this was the Roman post that had sped, by relay after relay of horses, right across Asia Minor bearing the Emperor's commands.

Three words would spring to his lips, "Civis Romanus sum"—"I am a Roman citizen—free born." And with that thought—though he knew how many of his fellow-Jews loathed the Roman rule—there would come the broadening feeling of possession in that Empire, which had made the Great Sea its Lake.

It was the third thread in Saul's life—the strong rough thread of the Roman *imperium.*

[1] Brindisi.

So the three threads were woven into the pattern of a boy's mind—the boy Saul who could say—speaking in the language of Greece,

> "I am a Jew of the tribe of Benjamin,
> A native of Tarsus in Cilicia,
> A citizen of no mean city.
> I am a Roman born."

He was a citizen of the world.

III

ON THE CARAVAN ROAD

ONE day, as he stood on the roof-top at home in Tarsus, Saul would hear the quick steps of asses coming along the street. The sound suddenly ceased in front of the house. Leaning over the parapet, he could see, in the swiftly fading evening light, tired travellers alighting. His father was eagerly welcoming them to enter the house. The foot-weary, dusty asses were being led away to the stable.

Saul knew what it meant. The days of the seeking of a new life were upon him, the hour when any boy is very glad and more than a little afraid.

Year after year pilgrims from the cities of the high plateau beyond the mountains, as surely as the sun would set behind Taurus, claimed the hospitality of a Jew so full of zeal for the nation as Saul's father. They were on their way south through Tarsus, seeking the Feast at Jerusalem. Over supper, while the student Saul nodded and roused himself between sleepiness and eager inquisitiveness, they would tell of the Roman cities up beyond the mountains—Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch; and of wild life among the hills on the way to Tarsus. He would hear tell of robbers who lurked among the grey crags and sprang out on the traveller as he passed through the ravine;

and how the Roman soldiers were trying to dislodge them from their fastnesses among the rocks.

Saul had, in the years that had gone, often said "Good-bye" to his father, who would sometimes go with these pilgrims down to the Feast at Jerusalem. The father would come back to Tarsus, weeks later, with wonderful stories of the people gathered from all over the world in the crowded Temple courts at Jerusalem, of the flowing robes of the bare-footed priests, the bleating of the thousands of lambs brought for sacrifice, the smoke curling up from the altars, the harsh clash of cymbals, the sounding of the brass trumpets.

Saul would ask many questions about the great "public-school" among the cloisters and courts of the Temple, where the masters sat, with their students in a circle round them, teaching and discussing the Law of Moses. For Saul already was an ambitious, swift-minded student. His brain absorbed everything that was about him. At school in Tarsus he was a keen boy, who leapt ahead of many of his class-mates. When he was old, indeed, the thing he remembered most clearly about his youth was

> "I advanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of mine own age among my race, being exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers."

His father then would have to tell the boy all about the incidents that happened in the Temple. It may well be that one day, when Saul's father was at the Temple after Passover, his eyes fell upon another Boy, a little older (he would note) than his own Saul—a

Jewish twelve-year-old peasant from Nazareth. This young peasant was sitting in one of those circles of students in front of the Rabbis (the teachers) after the feast-days,

> "both hearing them and asking them questions: and all that heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers."

It is quite possible that, if Saul's father noticed this Boy asking questions, he would think how clever He was; but he would not be likely to admit that this Jesus was a finer son than his own Saul at home in Tarsus. It is quite certain, however, that the father would listen very carefully to the greatest of these Temple teachers, the headmaster, whose name was Gamaliel—Gamaliel the learned and grave, the gentle and firm—the grandson of old Hillel the kind. And when he reached Tarsus again, he would tell them all about this wonderful headmaster till Saul, the student, now grown up into his 'teens, would feel that the greatest thing in the world would be to go from Tarsus to Jerusalem to Gamaliel, and

> "Powder himself in the dust at his feet,
> And drink in his words with thirstiness."

Like a young bird, just feeling the strength of its newly-fledged wings, Saul longed for a wider flight for his mind—some task greater, more difficult than the Jewish School at Tarsus could give to him.

Now, as the pilgrims visited his house, the hour had really come when Saul was to go up to the Feast at

Jerusalem. His dark face would flush with eagerness as he stood on the roof-top at Tarsus that evening and looked away south and east toward the land of his fathers and toward Jerusalem—away to the Great Sea, ten miles away, where it caught the glow of the sunset. The curious aching desire, half joy and half pain, that comes to us when at last we are to range in the wider world, would grip him now.

For in a few hours he was to start out with his father and the other pilgrims—to leave home, and see that wonderful Temple which Herod had built at Jerusalem, with its gleaming marble and gold that glittered in the sun—"A mountain of snow," they called it. And as Saul, after making his evening prayer toward Jerusalem, took his last look across the plain before going down into the house, he would see the lengthening purple shadows of the mountains stretching across the Cilician plain, and the last rays of the sun lighting up with gold "the mountain of snow" of the Taurus—a Temple "not made with hands."

Indoors his mother would be very busy folding the clothes which she had been making through the past weeks—the tunics and girdles, and especially the warm cloaks. Jerusalem was high up on the hills, and her son would need warmer clothes there in the winter than he did at home on the plain in Tarsus. Her son was going to the great public-school of his nation in Jerusalem. And he must have the clothes suitable. So she would count them and fold them—and, although she would be very proud and glad that her Saul was going out to take his place in the larger world, we

can believe that sometimes she would hardly be able to tell a tunic from a cloak for the dimness of her eyes.

Saul's father would be made of harder stuff. He belonged to the strictest of the strict Jews, the sect called the Pharisees—the Separatists who held themselves quite aloof from those who did not keep the Law very carefully. It would make the father very proud and happy that his son was so clever in learning this Law and in discussing it, and so eager to keep it.

The leave-taking over, the pilgrim-student would quickly forget the wrench of going from home in his eager enjoyment of his first journey. We cannot tell which way they travelled. They might go eastward by land to Syria, walking round the end of the gulf; but far more probably they would take the quicker sea-route from the lake-harbour below Tarsus to Cæsarea on the coast of Palestine.

Whether they went by sea or by land they would at last come out on to the long-winding caravan road, climbing among the hills on the way to Jerusalem. It was spring-time, and the fields were all dancing with nodding anemones, from flaming red to delicate heliotrope.

Up the long road could be seen the dusty pilgrims from many countries, all with their faces turned toward Jerusalem. Some rode on stately camels and others on ambling asses, like dignity travelling with impudence. There as the old Rabbi with dreamy face, who had travelled the road fifty times, nodding asleep, insecurely astride his overloaded donkey. Running alongside him were dark-haired, eager-eyed Jewish boys coming up for the first time, full of mis-

chief. A young mother, sitting behind all the family belongings balanced across the donkey's back, carried her baby up to Jerusalem, while the father walked beside them. Men from Cyprus and from Antioch, from far-off Greece, and even from Rome, were all on the road looking forward to the vision of the City set on the hill.

As the sun dropped near to the horizon everyone would be walking more slowly, for they were all very tired. At last the well where they could water the beasts and by which they could camp came in sight, and the camels and donkeys, sniffing the water, quickened their pace. Some slept in the inn by the well. But most of them would sleep out. Rough huts were swiftly made with branches for the women; while the boys searched round for twigs and roots, broken olive branches, and quickly-burning shrubs to start the camp fire.

Saul would almost fall asleep as he ate his crushed dates and raisins by the flickering fire. His evening prayer was soon made. Then he lay on the ground under the open sky. Nor would the melancholy howling of jackals echoing among the hills keep his tired eyes open.

The first glimmer of sunshine saw them on the road again in the cool of the morning. All day they trudged along, till at last, coming round the shoulder of a hill, they stopped to gaze. Saul's mind would fill with wonder. There, across the valley, more beautiful than an earthly palace (as it seemed to his excited mind), blazed the roof and walls of the Temple itself. All round was the majesty of Roman strength;

the garrison-citadel with Antony's tower, the wonderful palace of Herod and its lovely gardens kept green with water brought on the long aqueduct from a spring near Bethlehem, the great circle of the Roman theatre, the gymnasium astride the Tyropæan valley. Not these, but the Temple, the goal and centre of the life of the whole Jewish race, held Saul's eyes.

Tired though they were they would press patiently on, going down across the glen of the brook, up again and under the gateway through the wall into Jerusalem.

The next morning would find them going through the streets down past the Roman garrison-tower. There they found themselves jostled and elbowed by the many-coloured, ever-moving crowds of people from all the lands of the Mediterranean, from the banks of the Nile and the Tiber, the Orontes and the Euphrates, from the cities and the islands of the Ægean Sea, the mountain-valleys of Greece and the deserts and plateaux of Persia.

Turning to the right under the great gateway of the Temple they took off their sandals from their feet, "for it was holy ground," and gave their freewill offering into the Treasury. They waited while the spotless lamb of sacrifice was slain for them by the priest. Then Saul and his father and the others in their party went away. And in the evening they would go to an upper room to the supper, perhaps in the house of Saul's elder sister and her husband.

At supper the lamb was eaten as a sign that life is saved at the cost of life. They also ate bitter herbs to bring back to their minds how bitter their forefathers' slavery in Egypt had been in the days of old:

and took a paste made of crushed fruit and vinegar to recall the clay with which their fathers had made bricks under Pharaoh. So they celebrated the Supper of the Passover in Jerusalem.

When they had ended that supper, which is itself (as we have seen) a story of God leading His people out of slavery over sea and desert into a new land, the boy Saul, lonely, far away from home, and at the beginning of his life in this new great school, would, in the moments between lying down and falling asleep, reach out a hand into the darkness feeling after the hand of God, if haply he might find it. And, indeed, he had great need of that Hand; for the casement of his life was

> "opening on the foam
> Of perilous seas."

IV

THE GOLDEN AGE

AS he walked down to the Temple in the cool of the morning, Saul passed along streets lined with shops. Dates and figs, oranges and olives were there; coloured cloths and silks, sandals and shoes. The letter-writer sat in his shaded corner. Donkeys tripped by, bearing skins full of water.

These things would not hold Saul, nor make him loiter. They were not so strange to a boy from Roman Tarsus, with its busy market, as they were to the peasant-boys from villages like Nazareth, or even to the fisher-youths from Bethsaida and Capernaum on the shores of the Lake of Galilee.

Nor would the dark green of the olives on the grey Mount across the brook Kidron and the light green of the new shoots of the vines that made such a bright freshness on the old earth draw him out into the country round about Jerusalem; for he was a city-boy.

Saul's heart and soul and all his senses were fascinated by the life of that wonderful building which was the centre of the world to him—his school and college and cathedral; his Rugby, his Oxford, his Westminster Abbey in one—the Temple. Out of the stored-up words that he had learned by heart, whole songs would come rushing in on his memory, like the one beginning,

"I was glad when they said unto me,
Let us go unto the house of the Lord.
Our feet are standing
Within thy gates, O Jerusalem."

As he threaded his way through the crowds—jostled by togaed Romans and sandalled Greeks, scanned by copper-featured men from Egypt and bronzed travellers from the island of Crete; passing mysterious silent Arabs and slow-paced travellers from across the Euphrates; meeting men from Asia Minor (from the Pamphylian coast and the high tableland of Phrygia), he would remember the great preacher who foretold,

"Many nations shall go and say,
Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,
And to the House of the God of Israel;
And He will teach us of His ways,
And we will walk in His paths.
For out of Zion shall go forth instruction,
And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

"Many nations . . ." Here they were threading their way to and fro in these very streets. But suddenly, when he had crossed the outer pavement and gone toward the marble steps, he saw before him a slab of stone and in it were cut in bold Greek letters which he could read,

LET NO FOREIGNER ENTER WITHIN THE SCREEN AND ENCLOSURE SURROUNDING THE SANCTUARY. WHOSOEVER IS TAKEN SO DOING WILL HIMSELF BE THE CAUSE THAT DEATH OVERTAKETH HIM.

"Many nations shall . . . go to the House of the God of Israel," the word had said, but here was a notice forbidding the nations to enter, threatening death to any foreigner who did so. Saul would remember that only the Jews (or the men of other nations who had become what are called "proselyte Jews" by being circumcised) might come in here. All other men were exiles for ever from the central place where the Jews believed God was dwelling.

So Saul, the young Pharisee, proudly passed the stone of forbidding, and went up the steps into the outer court. He crossed the cool pavement which the sun had not yet warmed, passed between the pillars, under a gateway with gates of gold and silver, into the inner court of the men. A wavering column of smoke lifted slowly from the fire that burned perpetually on the altar of unhewn stone; and behind and beyond the smoke, up more steps, was the Holy Place, behind which was hidden the Holy of Holies. A shining golden roof was there, borne on pure marble pillars; and the sacred curtain over the golden door hid the holy place itself from his wondering, awe-struck gaze.

Turning to the side, Saul would see, under the cool, blue shadows of the cloisters, groups gathered round teachers; some arguing, others listening, while a white-bearded sage with dreaming eyes expounded the Law and the Prophets. Finding the place where Gamaliel sat, he would naturally go there. Leaning against one of the pillars, he could rest his hot cheek against the cool marble and listen to the teaching of the finest Pharisee of his day.

"The mind of the student must be like a cistern lined with cement. It must hold every drop of knowledge that enters in, losing nothing," said Gamaliel.

Saul already knew that the water in Jerusalem was stored in enormous cisterns when the rains fell, and that the people would die of thirst if the cisterns were to break or leak.

The ideal of the student, said his teacher, was to hold the pure water of the wisdom of the past.

That was the strength and the weakness of the teaching of the Jewish schooling. The Jew could hold ideas like a cistern; he was able to remember the old, but rarely to make new ideas. When he argued it was usually by hurling quotations at his opponent and not—as a Greek would argue—by a closely reasoned line of fresh thought. The great teachers of the Jews were men like Gamaliel, who said, "Thus spoke Moses"; not original thinkers like Plato and Aristotle. But if they could not reason wonderful philosophies, they could see marvellous visions of the future—more beautiful than anything we have ever yet reached in practice—of a time when men would

> "Beat their swords into ploughshares,
> And their spears into prunning-hooks:
> Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
> Neither shall they learn war any more."

The Pharisees' great aim was to know and obey all the Law; for they believed that, if one man obeyed the whole Law for a whole day, the Messiah who was to bring in the Golden Age of freedom and peace would arrive. So they laid down all sorts of astonish-

ing details as to exactly how the Jew should wash and keep the Sabbath, with endless arguments as to what was work and what was not. This was called the Spoken Law (or Torah), to distinguish it from the written law of Moses.

Just as he had seen students writing with an ivory style on a wax tablet, so Saul wrote on his memory the weary details of the Law.

"You may lean a ladder from one window of a dovecote to another on the Sabbath," Saul would hear; "but you may not move the foot of it."

"You may tap the ground with your foot, but not rub your sandal along the earth—for that would be ploughing. You must not pluck an ear of corn or rub the corn out of it with your hands; for you would be guilty of reaping and threshing; nor must you light a fire on the Sabbath."

He learned how to stand and how to bow when praying, how to wash his hands, how many steps he might walk on the Sabbath, and a thousand other things.

Yet Gamaliel, his master, was a man who loved the richer thoughts from the great teachers of the past. Sometimes, like a great light in a dark place, one of these beautiful words would come out and Saul's whole spirit would leap up when he heard Gamaliel say:

"Thus said Hillel: 'What is hateful to yourself do not to your fellow-men—this is the whole Law—the rest is only explanation. Go, study!'"

. . . . . .

Starting out from the Temple in the evening Saul would pass by the Roman citadel.

"Quo vadis?"; the challenge from the man on sentry-go to a skulking figure at the garrison-gate, the clank of sword and buckler, the rattle of chains of the cavalry horses and the stamp of their restless hoofs in the stables, the flare of a torch—all would startle the brooding student out of his thoughts of the Law.

The Roman citadel loomed above him. Silhouetted against the sky was the high watch-tower—Antony's tower they called it (he would remember), after the Mark Antony, the Roman ruler, who entertained Cleopatra years ago at Tarsus. Rome! The word would send a strangely mingled feeling through him. Saul was a Roman citizen. But his swift arteries pulsed with the passionate blood of a Jew.

Rome had made the throne of this young student's great forefather and namesake, Saul, an empty thing. Here in Jerusalem, where David once led his soldiers out over the hills to destroy the enemies of his people, Rome now ruled with sword and lash and cross. The judgment-seat, where Solomon once sat to give his decrees, was now filled by a proud Roman, who cared mainly for his chances of promotion from Rome and his bribes from the rich in Jerusalem. If they dared to lift a hand to strike for freedom, the Jews were crucified—so Saul had learned in the evenings when the students got together and talked the gossip of the city. Saul's heart thumped with anger within him as he went through the streets in the evening.

Yet Saul the Jew was, also, Paul the Roman citizen.

In the morning, as he went down again to the Temple, he would feel that he would give his very life to bring in the New Age when the Messiah would rule

in the City of David again. Would there ever be a King of the Jews in Jerusalem?

Then, as he sat at the feet of Gamaliel for the morning lesson, he would look up with a startled joy as he heard the old man's voice shaking with the same longing that he himself felt. From the tremulous lips of the teacher would come the lava of the volcanic fires of patriotism in the words of the song of the Golden Age and of the coming of the new King, written over a hundred years before by a fervid Pharisee.

The words focussed all the burning rays of Saul's desire till they scorched the very soul of the student.

"O Lord, raise up for them their King, the son of David.
He shall bring glory to the Lord
In a place which all the world shall see.

He shall sweep clean Jerusalem and make it holy
As it was in the olden days.
A just King and taught by God is he who will reign,
There shall be no wrong in his days among them,
For all shall be holy:
Their King is the Lord Messiah."

As he heard the words, Saul would see with the keen vision of his mind's eye a young valiant Prince, coming up over the hills at the head of a glittering army, sweeping the Romans out of the city and the land, and himself ruling, not only over Jerusalem, but the whole earth.

Immortal words that Saul had learned would ring in his head:

"There was given him power and glory and a kingdom,
That all people, nations, and languages, should serve him:
His dominion is an everlasting dominion,
Which shall not pass away,
And his Kingdom shall not be destroyed."

The song of the Golden Age had been written a hundred years before Saul was in Jerusalem. Yet in all that century the Fighting Prince had not arrived. Would he ever come?

"When will he come?" the young students would ask Gamaliel. "What will he be like?"

"He may come at any day, at any hour. He will come when the need is greatest—and great is the need now. He will be of the tribe of Judah; a son of David. He will be born—he may already have been born—in Bethlehem, or Jerusalem. He will lead an army. Be prepared. Beware of the false Messiahs who are leading the people astray. Watch—for the conquering King will certainly come."

In such words as these Gamaliel would tell his students of the Golden Age that was to be, and the Prince who even then might be preparing his army.

What a harsh, contemptuous laugh would have broken out in that group of Law students in the Temple if someone could have told them the truth which no one then knew—that the Conquering Prince was already in their country; that, in a village among the hills, three days' journey northward, He was in a carpenter's shop making yokes for oxen.

. . . . . .

Yet, even as Saul and his fellow-students walked from the Temple in the afternoon talking of the coming King, the young village Carpenter, Jesus, shook the sweet-scented shavings and sawdust from

His tunic, and—pulling His girdle tighter as He gave a smiling word to His mother—walked out of the shade of the cool workshop into the sunny street, and climbed the glorious hills

"that girdle quiet Nazareth"

V

"WHOM SAY YE THAT I AM?"

THROUGH spring after spring the storks trailed northward by Jordan and desert, sea and plain, while Saul, the student of the Law, was learning. Like the wrestlers, whom he watched at Tarsus at the Greek games when he went home, he grew quicker and more confident as, year after year, he tussled in swift argument with his fellow-students or even tried a bout of words with Gamaliel.

So eager was he for the triumph of "the true worship," so passionate was his reverence for the one Holy God, that he was ready to kill—he even believed that God would want him to kill his own brother, if that brother were to ask him to worship any of these other gods.

The words that he knew so well would ring through his head—words from the Law of Moses.

> "You shall not consent unto him,
> Nor listen to him;
> Neither shall your eye pity him,
> Neither shall you spare,
>
> Neither shall you conceal him:
> But you shall surely kill him . . .
> You shall stone him with stones that he die;
> Because he has tried to draw you
> Away from the Lord your God."

. . . . . .

Yet, even as Saul repeated the awful words of the Law, Jesus—Who had now left His Nazareth home—was walking with those young Galilee fishermen, whom he had called from their boats by the lake to follow Him, and was saying to them:

"Love your enemies,
Do good to them that hate you,
Bless them that curse you,
Pray for them that despitefully use you.
To him who smites you on the one cheek
Offer also the other . . .
Love your enemies, and do them good, . . .
And you shall be sons of the Most High:
For He is kind toward the unthankful and evil."

. . . . . .

Andrew and Simon, John, James and Philip and the others, as they sat round Him on the grass of the mountain-side, heard the words:

"Happy are you poor, for the Kingdom of God is yours.
Happy are you who hunger now, for you shall be fed.
Happy are you who weep, for you shall laugh.
Be happy when men hate you and insult you.
Dance for joy, for just so did they treat the Prophets.
Love your enemies and forgive those who have done evil to you."

Their spirits leapt out in answer to the glorious height and might of His appeal.

A thought took shape in their minds. Could it really be that this was He, the Prince-Messiah, for Whom they and all their fellow-countrymen looked to save their people?

"Yes, but if He is the Messiah (they would ask one another), will He lead us and all the people from the villages and towns against the Romans? Shall

we make Him King of the Jews? What about getting swords and spears for fighting?"

He gathered them round Him, and with gentle simplicity and dignity told them of a Kingdom that was not of force, but of love—a Kingdom where the tired, starving prodigal son and the loathed tax-collector, the poor woman and the strong young men would all come in the spirit of children, in happy comradeship and holy worship.

Then one day, in answer to a question from Jesus, "Whom do *ye* say that I am?" the impetuous Simon blurted it out:

"You are the Christ!"

He took a baby on His knee and His arm was round a boy who stood by His side.

"The Kingdom," he said, "is of such as these. Whoever does not accept the Kingdom like one of these will never enter it."

And a great sternness came over His face as He declared:

"Whoever makes one of these least stumble, it would be better that a millstone were hung round his neck and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

Then He walked on southward, walked apart from them, His face set and stern, on through the gathering night, to face all the tense hate that He knew had gathered against Him at Jerusalem, the Jerusalem which Saul, now a graduate, had probably left, to return to his home at Tarsus. The snarling priests of the Jews and the cruel soldiers of Rome were at one for once, in their hate of the Jesus. For His King-

dom was to be higher and stronger than either the thousand rules of the priests, or the sword and the fortress of Rome—and they knew it and hated Him.

At last He stood in the Temple court in all the might of His own simple majesty. There—where Saul had been learning the whole duty of the Pharisee—He stood and raised His voice as He pointed to priests and Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees.

"Alas for you!" cried Jesus. "Teachers and Pharisees, play-actors, humbugs. You will not go into the Kingdom, and you will not let anyone else go in. You white-washed graves, outwardly clean, you are inwardly rotten. You slaughterers of the prophets whom you flog and kill; how can you—alas! how can you escape condemnation?"

He turned His back on them—left them, for His Last Supper and the agony in the Garden.

After Supper, when He had gone into the Garden across the Brook, there came the flickering glow of torches, whose light danced and wavered as the soldiers stumbled down the dark ravine and crossed into Gethsemane. They took Him to the Hall of Hewn Stone, where the hastily gathered Council of Priests heard Him say what was to them the last blasphemy —"I am the Christ."

They called Him "Liar," and those who wore the robes of servants of God spat in His face, blindfolded Him, let the soldiers beat Him, jeering at Him, and saying:

"Now, Prophet, guess who smote Thee?"

To the sound of the voice of cursing Peter, saying, "I never knew the Man," He crossed from the Hall

of the Jewish Council to the Roman Judgment Hall, to look in the face of careless Pilate and to enter into the crafty, coarse, shifty presence of Herod. They lashed Him with a many-thonged whip: they crushed a cruel crown of thorns on His head; put on Him a mock royal robe and a sceptre-reed. And the cry went up to the brazen sky:

"Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

For six hours, nailed to the Roman gibbet-cross, He hung, till His cry came, "It is finished."

They buried Him in a stone-cut sepulchre.

. . . . . .

As the dawn came up over Galilee one morning and men who had fished all night without catching anything drew near to the shore, a Voice came over the water:

"Comrades, have you any fish?"

"No," they answered.

"Throw out the net on the other side."

And it was full of fish.

Christ had risen! He was there again as in the great days. Once more and for the last time the comrades sat to breakfast on the beach. The last words that He said that morning were the first that He had spoken on the same pebble beach three years before.

"Follow Me."

. . . . . .

And somewhere Saul, the young law graduate, was rising that same morning, putting on the spotless white robe of the Pharisee—washing his hands and face in running water, and making his morning prayer toward

the Temple. He was trying to do the will of God in every detail.

To him came the story that was gathering the people in gossip in the bazaars of Jerusalem—that the followers of the crucified rebel Nazarene, Jesus, declared that He had risen again and were actually worshipping in His name.

Saul's soul shuddered at the blasphemy.

"Cursed is he who hangs on the tree," said the Law.

These blasphemous, ignorant Galilean peasants were worshipping the cursed!

The refrain of the Law would hammer again at the brain of Saul as he thought of these men.

> "Neither shall your eye pity him.
> Neither shall you spare, . . .
> But you shall surely kill him . . .
> You shall stone him with stones that he die."

VI

THE SCOURGE OF THE NAZARENES

WHETHER Saul was at home in Tarsus when Jesus was crucified and rose again we cannot truly know. But now, when all Jerusalem was full of the story of the Nazarene movement, he was certainly back walking in the Temple courts and greeting with reverence his old master Gamaliel.

In the shadow of the cloisters, behind the marble pillars, he would gather with young men of his own stamp—hot-blooded, keen-witted young zealous Pharisees—and go over the whole maddening story. As it sunk into his mind, his anger grew hot beyond measure.

"Yes," they would say, "we thought that, when this Pretender, Jesus of Nazareth, was taken up the hill there and nailed to the cross between two other miscreants, that would be the end; and that these Galilean fellows would go quietly back to their fishing. But now they actually come into these very courts and blaspheme this holy place by declaring that Jesus has risen from the dead—Jesus, who must be cursed (as the Law says), for He has hung upon the tree. And they say—may the Holy One of Israel forgive me for repeating it!—that the Most High has poured out His Spirit on the followers of Jesus. What is worse still, the people are beginning to believe them. There

are thousands of these Nazarenes in Jerusalem now—even some of the priests have gone over to them.

"They go down there in Solomon's Porch and speak to one another and to the people. But last night they were locked up by the High Priest, and they are to be tried to-day. See, there they come!"

There in the Temple court stood the Nazarene leaders, and prominent among them a dark-haired, radiant, courageous-looking man. The Captain of the Temple Guard came up to Peter, as he was speaking to the people, and led him and his friends away to the assembly of priests—while the people round about murmured to one another, saying that these interfering officials ought to be stoned.

Saul was probably there, and, if so, he would see the High Priest look straight at Peter, and say:

"We ordered you not to teach in this Name (of Jesus). Yet you have filled Jerusalem with it. Now, forsooth, you want to bring this man's blood on us."

"We must obey God rather than men," Peter said boldly. "And God raised up Jesus Whom you (and his arm swung round over the company of priests) killed—hanging Him on a tree. God lifted Him up to be a Prince and to save us. . . . We (and Peter would turn to point to his friends) have seen these things; and the Holy Spirit also (Whom God has given to those who obey Him) is witness that this is true."

The eyes in front of Peter gleamed with anger; the mouths grew stern.

"Let us kill them," was the word that went from

priest to priest as they listened with startled faces to Peter accusing them of killing God's Messiah.

Then a sudden silence fell as all eyes turned toward a commanding figure who stood up.

"It is Gamaliel," the word went round.

Saul would crane his neck and listen intently for what his old teacher might say. In Saul's own heart the word of the Law for such blasphemous idolators as these Nazarenes throbbed the answer:

"You shall stone him with stones that he die."

But Gamaliel said, "Take the men away for a time."

At a signal from the High Priest the Captain of the Temple had Peter and his friends led away.

"Take care," said Gamaliel, when the Nazarenes were out of earshot, "take care what you decide to do about these men. My advice is, let them alone. If this work is simply of men it will come to nothing. If it is of God, you cannot overthrow it. And you may discover, after all, that you have been fighting against God."

Saul, in spite of his youth, would hardly be able to keep silence at such advice. He disagreed violently with every word his old master had said.

"Tear out this blasphemous clique, root and branch," would have been his advice if he had been asked. He felt thus, not because he disliked the men themselves, but because he really believed that they had put a Pretending Messiah on a level with the Holy God. They were making a parody of all the things Saul held to be most sacred. To preserve the holy religion of Jehovah these men must be killed, as the Law commanded.

But the wise speech of Gamaliel carried the day. The priests decided not to kill Peter and John and the other leaders, though they would not let them off without some punishment. So the Nazarenes were brought to the priests again, and their backs were bared to the pitiless rods of the Temple Guard, who rained strokes upon them.

"Now," said Caiaphas, "do not ever again speak in the name of Jesus."

But on the following morning, if he went to the marble steps of the Temple, he would have seen these incorrigible Galilean peasants already speaking. And there were the crowds, who listened eagerly to the Good News of the love and power of God the Father, Who had raised Jesus, the true Messiah.

Those who joined the Nazarenes learned, beside the love of the Father, to obey Jesus' one great commandment that they should "love one another." And when they met in one another's houses for supper and broke the little loaves of bread and drank their cup of wine together, they did it in remembrance of Him.

Saul walked along the streets of Jerusalem, brooding over the growth of this new party of Nazarenes. He nursed his anger till his hot young blood boiled within him in hate of them. He must have been perplexed sometimes; for he would see, in their faces and bearing, a blithe courage, a cheerful boldness that neither swaggered nor cringed. They glowed with some inner, secret light. They seemed always lively in spirit, like flowers kept fresh by a hidden spring of living water. If asked for their secret they said that the Holy Spirit

—the Comforter—Who Jesus had promised should come, was in them.

Saul's anger would break out again at this parody —as it seemed to him—of sacred things. He had argued with the Nazarenes; especially had he and others of the Cilician synagogue where he worshipped in Jerusalem discussed with a young Jew—like himself, a Jew from a foreign land—named Stephen. But neither he nor the other learned men from Tarsus and Rome and Egypt could break down Stephen's assurance of the Risen Jesus.

Unable to overcome Stephen in discussion they got some men to go down to the Temple to the priests to witness against him. When these men came in front of the members of the great council, called the Sanhedrin, they said:

"There is a man named Stephen, one of these Nazarenes, who says that Jesus will come and destroy all this place"—and they pointed to the glorious Temple of shining marble, with its roof of gold, and to the sacred portico hiding the Holy of Holies. "And he dares to say that this Jesus will change all the customs that Moses gave us."

This was rebellion and blasphemy in one, so the Council gave orders for Stephen's arrest and trial.

The men went and took hold of Stephen and led him down to the Hall of Hewn Stone, while, outside, the people flocked together to talk about the trial. The President of the Council took his seat. Round him in a great semicircle were the other sixty-nine judges. In front of them stood the accused Stephen.

The witnesses told their story again.

"Are these things so?" asked the President.

They all fastened their eyes on Stephen. And they saw—not a cringing, frightened prisoner, but a man whose glowing face shone like the face of an angel.

There was the dead and chilling silence of watchful enemies as Stephen's voice rang out clearly in the hall.

"Brothers and fathers, listen!"

And he told them the great story which they knew so well, but of which they never saw the true meaning—the story of how the God of Glory had appeared to their Father Abraham and led him from one land to another and then had carried Joseph to Egypt, leading again the people under Moses back from Egypt across the desert to the promised land where Solomon built the Temple for the house of God.

At this point they would all lean forward to listen intently to what was to follow, for the accusation against Stephen was that he scorned this Temple—declared that it would be destroyed. Swiftly he went on with a quotation from a prophet, in whom they all professed to believe, showing that

"The Most High does not live in a Temple made with hands"; or, as the prophet put it,

> "The sky is my throne
> And the earth the footstool of my feet,
> What kind of house will you build me? asks the Lord:
> Does not my hand make all these things?"

Stephen's argument was that they and not he were the real blasphemers—they who put the marble and gold Temple above the great Spirit, "the God of Glory," Who made everything, Who sent Jesus Whom

the priests had destroyed, though He was greater than the Temple. So he turned on them with sudden passion and flung out his scathing denunciation. Startled, they saw the accused suddenly become the terrible accuser.

"You stiff-necked men—you always set yourself against that Holy Spirit. Your fathers did, and so do you. They killed the prophets long ago, killed the men who told that the Just One was coming: and now you have become His betrayers and murderers—yes, you who have the Law and do not keep it."

All pretence of judicial trial was swept aside. With frenzied faces they ground and gnashed their teeth with anger on him.

But, even as their fury rose, Stephen's stern anger fell from him. He looked up above the heads of his accusers, up and away to a vision that held his eyes.

"I see the Heavens opened," he declared, "and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God."

"Blasphemy, blasphemy!" rose in a yell of horror and rage. They shouted to drown the voice of Stephen and put their hands over their ears so that they should not hear a word more. The court rose as one man and rushed on him. They dragged him up the streets out to the city wall, under the dark shadows of the gateway.

"Stone him, stone him!" came the hoarse and hideous cry, though out of windows peered the heads of timorous, weeping women, and under the shadow of doorways boys, who had learned to think what a splendid hero Stephen was, shivered with a nameless dread as he passed.

In the crowd was a young, hot-blooded Pharisee, whose heart thumped, "Stone him, stone him!"—Saul, whose natural tenderness was all burned up in a great hate of these maddening Nazarenes and their "risen Jesus."

Out from the shadow of the northern gateway they came on to the edge of a ravine beyond the city wall, the Place of Stoning.

The witnesses threw off their robes in a heap at the feet of the young Pharisee, Saul. Then, stooping, they lifted the grey, jagged stones that lay on the ground. Pushing with frenzied hands, others thrust Stephen out over the edge of the ridge.

"Lord Jesus," he called, lifting his face to the skies, "receive my spirit." The stones beat upon him. Falling to his knees, he called out again, in the very spirit of his Master, Who had said, "Father, forgive them!"

"Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."

And when he had said this he fell asleep.

. . . . . .

The stoners wiped the grit from their hands and stooped to pick up their cloaks from the feet of Saul. They had drawn first blood. Did any pity move in Saul himself at the sight of the bruised body lying there? He must have winced, for all through his life he showed a strong tenderness. But he believed that God called him to scourge these Nazarenes, and the words of the Law would come back to him:

> "Neither shall your eye pity him,
> Neither shall you spare."

Back to the city then. Beating down the pity that he felt, Saul, at the head of a body of Temple Guards, scoured the streets, broke into the houses of those who professed faith in Jesus and binding them—men and women alike—he had them driven like cattle down to the prison. Men and women fled from Jerusalem by hundreds; they hurried away among the hills of Judæa and northward into Samaria. And everywhere, when they settled down into their village or passed from place to place, they told the story of Jesus.

Saul, being exceedingly mad against the Nazarenes, and striving in a frenzied campaign to quiet the qualms of remorse that he felt, had stamped his foot into the fire of the Faith at Jerusalem to put it out. The blazing embers flew out and kindled new flame in all the land. He breathed out threatening and murder, and his fury fed itself on the stories that came in from pilgrims to Jerusalem of the way the Nazarene faith was spreading. Saul brooded over it. One day, having come to a decision, he went down to the Temple court and sought the High Priest.

The eyes of the old man would light up with approval as he heard Saul pouring out his desire to go north and stamp out the Nazarenes. His plan was to go straight to the great capital of the north country, Damascus. If Jerusalem and Damascus were once scoured and all the disciples of Jesus there haled to prison, the movement would die out in the isolated villages. Calling his letter-writer, Caiaphas dictated letters to the chief Jews in the synagogues of Damascus, saying that, if any of the Nazarenes were there,

Saul had authority to take them prisoner and lead them as captives to Jerusalem.

Saul swiftly prepared himself for the great journey. With his young face turned northward, he passed out of Jerusalem under the arch of the great gateway in the city wall into the open country.

VII

THE GREAT ADVENTURE

THE lengths of the Roman road stretched ahead of Saul and his companions as they rode out in the sunshine. He climbed till he could look back on the City of Jerusalem, and all its buildings ringed round with the grim walls. The line of the wall was broken with many towers. On one of these the armour of some Roman sentry would catch the glint of the morning light. But Saul would barely turn his head to look back, for he was on urgent business. And it was outside that wall that he had stood consenting to the death of Stephen.

Would the memory of that face never leave him?

The road ran close by the hill Gibeah, on whose fortified crest his great ancestor and namesake had lived before the days when he was called to be the first of all the kings of Israel. King Saul had slain his thousands with sword and javelin in his battles against the enemies of Israel; but even he had never seemed more sure that he was fighting in the cause of God than was this young namesake, who was now dashing northward to make havoc among the disciples. Yet, even as Saul hurried on, the questions would rise in his mind: What was the secret of the calm, cheerful boldness of these strange people? They must be wrong about Jesus—and yet, was it possible that,

after all, Gamaliel might be right when he said, "Beware lest you find yourselves fighting against God"?

Beyond Gibeah Saul rode northward till the great mass of Mount Ephraim bent the road to the right. Saul would see laden camels coming up a road that ran in from the left carrying goods from the Roman port of Cæsarea. But he himself would keep the direct road by the hills of Samaria.

He stopped to drink at the well of Jacob, and perhaps to sleep at a wayside rest-house there, whence he would see the sun set between the Mount of the Curse and the Mount of the Blessing—Gerizim and Ebal. But nothing except the need for food and drink and sleep would make him pause.

The road was a busy one. A Roman colonial would pass, riding to his new station, with his retinue of horses and mules; the shaded palanquin [1] for his wife swung on the shoulders of slave-bearers; the clattering guard of soldiers—horse and foot—behind. A caravan of Men of the Desert walking beside their camels wound southward, bringing bales of Damascus cloth for selling in the bazaars of Jerusalem.

Then Saul came over the hills down into the broad hot valley of Jordan, with Mount Gilboa lifting itself on his left, and crossing the stream that runs from the Valley of Jezreel on his left, Saul and his friends marched straight on; till at last he could look up the Lake of Galilee, with its busy encircling road joining up the fishing towns under the quiet hills dappled with flocks of roaming sheep and goats.

[1] To this day these palanquins are known by the name of "Takht Aronam"; i.e. "Roman bedstead."

If he had stopped here to linger on the lakeside and to ask the men who sat mending their nets about the Jesus Who had sailed across its shining blue waters and preached from a fishing-boat to the people gathered on the white beach, Saul would have heard such stories of love and healing as would have deepened his questionings whether, after all, Jesus was the Great Pretender.

The lake, however, with its quiet industry, its brown fishermen, and its brooding hills reflected in the bright water, could not hold him. To him hunger and fatigue, the lake and the hills, stream and bridge and road, were just obstacles between himself and his goal—Damascus.

Skirting the west bank of the lake past Magdala, and riding across the Gennesaret Plain, he climbed the northward hills thrust out like gnarled roots of Mount Lebanon. Then turning east, he dropped again to the valley of the River Jordan, which he crossed by a Roman bridge. He would see the oxen dragging wagons up the hills, with the heavy solid wheels creaking and the driver shouting as he prodded the slow beasts with his goad. Then one ill-tempered ox (Saul might notice) kicked against the goad, only to drive the iron point further into his own skin.

Day after day Saul pressed on. Higher and higher loomed the great ridge of Anti-Lebanon where the oaks clothed the high range and flecked the rock-clefts with green. In the heat of the day he would look up over his left shoulder and feel glad to see the white summit of Mount Hermon. From the melting snows of Hermon the streams ran down to make all the

parched land glad. For three days that strong, majestic mountain of white peacefulness was his companion, gleaming pink in the dawn as he started each day and silhouetted in royal purple as the sun set over its shoulder.

The last day of his journey had, at length, come. In the hour before sunrise, the hour when the shepherd leads his flock from the fold on to the hills while the dew still fringes the cup of the anemone, Saul started out from the rest-house with his companions. The dawn came up out of the desert-land eastward, and the Hermon height glowed as they pressed forward over the volcanic tableland which at last drops down on the plain of Damascus.[1]

The sun lifted slowly in the shadeless land. The hour of noon drew near, when the power of the sun is like a burden bowing the shoulders of the traveller. The camel-caravans drew out of the road under the eaves of a rest-house, and no sound of bells broke the burning silence that only seemed deepened by the hum of many insects.

The travellers came over a crest of a low hill. The road stretched ahead of them across the plain of orchards, beyond which the walls of Damascus rose. A dream-city—a mirage of the desert—she looked, as her roofs quivered, seen through the trembling air.

It was the hour when all the world of the East rests. But the young campaigner was in the full flood of his boundless energy. Ahead was the city where he was to win his spurs. Feeling in his breast

[1] The old Roman road runs from the Bridge of Jacob's daughters via Sasa on to Damascus. The plateau is fairly level.

for the sealed and signed parchment of the High Priest, he bent his head to the blazing sun and pressed on. Nothing (it seemed) could stop this scourge of the Nazarenes. But even as his next step was taken on that shoulder of the hill,

"At that next white corner of the road,"

he met his great adventure—he came to that moment that made all his life new—a moment that changed the history of the world.

"Suddenly," he tells us (and the experience is so sacred and wonderful that one dare not try to describe it in any except his own words), "there shone from heaven a great light round about me.

"I fell to the ground and heard a Voice saying to me:

"'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goad.'

"'Who are you, Lord?' I answered.

"And He said to me:

"'I am Jesus the Nazarene, whom you are persecuting.'

"I said, 'What shall I do, Lord?'

"And the Lord said to me:

"'Rise, and go to Damascus; and it shall be told you there the things that are appointed for you to do.'"

So Saul stood up, opened his eyes—and could not see. Damascus, the whole plain, the white crest of Hermon, the green of the orchards—all were gone. He groped, but could not find his way. As they saw his hands vainly reaching for a hold, those who were

with him realised that he was blind. They put out their hands to his, and led him over the last league of his journey.

Saul was shut in on himself. He could not look out on the sights of the roadside nor return the glances of the curious peasants who gazed at this white-robed young Rabbi being led along the road. There was only one thing that he could see, and it was burned in on his brain in that blaze that smote him to his knees. He had seen that Vision after which nothing could ever be the same again—

> "The light of the glory of God
> In the face of Jesus Christ."

His brain, the mind that had been so confident of itself, reeled at the thought of what it all meant. Jesus the Nazarene was alive—alive; and had conquered him—Saul, the brilliant Law graduate, the young Rabbi, the rising hope of the Pharisees. Under his mantle he felt again that crisp roll—the High Priest's letter to the synagogue priests, telling them to help Saul in haling the Nazarenes off to prison. And now—there was no mistaking it—he himself was a Nazarene—new-born.

> "He knew that Christ had given him birth
> To brother all the souls on earth."

In that hour when he staggered toward Damascus with wide, unseeing eyes, did an inner picture come back on him?—a furious crowd outside the walls of Jerusalem; men stooping to pick up jagged stones, the air thick with missiles, a face looking up and a voice, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Not even

blindness could blot out that awful picture of himself, Saul, standing by, and backing those who were slaying Stephen. And now he himself, like Stephen, was a Nazarene.

. . . . . .

The sound of the echo of his own footsteps told Saul that he was passing under an arch of the city gate. He heard the steps and voices of the crowds going to and fro up the footway; the grind of chariot wheels and clatter of hoofs in the road. He felt the cooler shadow of the covered way. Then his companions stopped, and knocked at a doorway, which was opened. Saul was led into the house of a Damascene Jew, Judas.

From the roof of that house a man making his evening prayer toward Jerusalem would see the sun dropping behind the purpling shoulders of Hermon. It was sunset in Damascus. But it was dawn in the life of Saul.

VIII

THE UNTRAVELLED WORLD

ON a rug on the floor, motionless, seeing nothing, eating and drinking nothing, Saul began to grope his way in the new life that had begun. He was in a luminous darkness, dazed with light. Men said he was blind—and truly his eyes were sightless—yet he himself knew that he really saw now for the first time.

The face of Jesus of Nazareth—it was the one unfading vision before his poor sightless eyes. In that face Saul saw, in the sound of that voice in his ears, he heard infinite Power and triumphant Love. He was dizzy with a new happiness; the consuming fire of his love and worship for the Christ burned in him; the Christ Who, through the power of God, had conquered death, and had then, with incredible mercy, called Saul the persecutor himself to His service.

Saul had harried the Nazarenes as blasphemers because they declared that the impossible had happened in the peasant Jesus;—but now he knew that it was true! For weal or woe, come prison or scourge, stoning or exile or the cross itself, he, Saul, was Christ's man. Now he understood why those Nazarenes always glowed with an inner light. This was the secret of Stephen's radiant face, even while the stones beat

him to the earth. Nothing could separate him from the love of Christ. Then his hand went to his breast where the parchment lay. What an impossible change had come! This letter rolled up in his robe, which he fingered but could not see, this authority to put the Nazarenes in Damascus in chains—it was just so much waste parchment—must be torn up. It belonged to a dead past. Really it had become an authority to put himself in prison!

What, also, of his career as a rabbi at Jerusalem? That was ended for ever. What would Gamaliel think—and say—when he heard that his brilliant pupil, the hope of Pharisaism, had turned Nazarene? And his own people at Tarsus—his stern father, the Pharisee of the Pharisees—would he ever speak to his son again? Yet Saul was—in all this turmoil of thoughts—dizzy, not with sorrow, but with a new happiness. He felt as though he had been let out of a dark, lifelong prison and had found a glorious liberty in a new unexplored land.

The great blinding Vision that had come to him on the ridge was

> "... An arch, wherethrough
> Gleamed the untravelled world."

. . . . . .

The first task, then, was to explore this new vast continent of thought, and to do this with the greatest of all Companions.

Day after day he brooded there in his blindness. At last, as he sat thinking, a footstep came into the room, and the swish of a man's robe reached his quick

ears. Saul sat silent. He felt mysterious hands, out of the darkness, laid on his head.

"Brother Saul," the words dropped on his ears gratefully. Then followed the sudden and unexpected words, "Receive your sight, and the gift of the Holy Spirit."

In that moment scales seemed to drop from his eyes. He looked up and saw before him a Jew of Damascus—a follower of Jesus—named Ananias, who told Saul he was to be a witness to everyone that Jesus was, indeed, sent by God.

How could Saul do this? He knew—indeed, it seemed to him to be the only thing that he did know—that Jesus, Who spoke to him on the road, was the Son of God; but how to explain it all, to make other people understand—that was the problem. Why, he had come to Damascus to clap chains on people for saying this very thing.

He must be alone to think it all out. He took some food and was strong again. After he had spent a little time with Ananias and the other disciples in Damascus, he took his travelling staff, girded up his robe and went out. He found himself in the splendid colonnade of a great Roman street. It was called "Straight" street, because it stretched like an arrow right across Damascus from east to west.

Saul stood in the shadow of the covered footway and saw Roman chariots rattling over the broad, flagged central way. The chariots were held up here and there by strings of camels coming in from the east gate—the "Ship of the Desert" rolling into the port of Damascus. Donkeys passed—each laden with

a rick of withes for making baskets—till Saul could see only the long ears and the head of each ass peering out from the great arch of twigs. Looking down the great avenue with its rows of marble columns, between the footpaths and the central chariot way, he saw a triumphal arch spanning the street, with triple ways passing beneath it.

Saul turned eastward and passed along the footway. The plash of water in fountains sounded gratefully cool in his ears. He would look in and see the mottled moving reflection of the pool on the cloistered vaulting of the courtyard of some great Roman's house. Water—there seemed to be unlimited water in Damascus—here, even on the very edge of the desert, while in Jerusalem they were obliged, like misers, to store the rains in their great underground cisterns. Whence this plenty?

He would learn that out from under the mountains west of the city

> ". . . a sacred river ran
> Through caverns measureless to man."

It was the ancient Abana, which made and makes Damascus. For this river has saved all that plain from being desert—watering her lovely orchards of figs and pomegranate, her vineyards of purple grapes, her plantations of cool green melons.

Olive-faced Jews, sturdy Roman soldiers, weather-beaten Arabs from the desert, brown-faced boys on their way to school, as each went about his own business, wove in and out the moving threads of the tapestry of the street.

He was to be a witness (Ananias had said)—not against, but for Jesus, to all people.

"To all these?"

The question must have framed itself in Saul's mind as he gazed at the medley of peoples.

Saul went under the rounded arch of the east gate, and—without companion—walked out toward the low purple hills seven leagues away on the edge of the desert. He wanted to be entirely alone, to go out into the desert and there discover what he was to do with his future. He could think this out, not in the rush of the Roman city of Damascus, but in

> "The silence that is in the starry sky,
> The peace that is among the lonely hills;"

where he could hear the Voice speaking within him.

So he went out into the yellow sandy wastes of Arabia. There, in some oasis of the desert, maybe, under a palm tree by a little well, he sat and, like a great explorer, went

> "Voyaging on strange seas of thought
> Alone."

He plunged into virgin forests of thought and cut his way through where no one had gone, throwing bridges across deep chasms that no man had ever crossed before—chasms like that bottomless ravine between Law and Love. The thoughts which he worked out then have guided what men have believed all through the centuries since. It was a difficult exploring for Saul, who, like a scout, went ahead of the army to spy out the new land.

Some beliefs that Saul had always had from a boy he held even after his meeting with Jesus.

He had always believed that God is all-wise, all-good, all-powerful. He now held this in a deeper, truer way than before.

He had always believed that he must be obedient to God absolutely and do His will. He now felt a tingling joy in this obedience, because he saw that God is Love.

He had always believed that God had promised to send the Messiah, the Saving Prince, to rule the people; and that God would keep that promise. Now he knew that the promise had been kept—only in a surprising and glorious way, as high above all that he had expected as the heavens were higher than the earth.

Some of Saul's new thoughts came from the old root of his boy-ideas, but were utterly changed; like those shining, nodding anemones he saw on the roadside, which had sprung from hard, brown, unattractive roots.

All his life, for instance, from the days when he sat writing with his finger on the sand-strewn floor of the school at Tarsus, he had believed that the Law of Moses was to govern every hour of every day of his life, from washing his hands in the morning to taking off his sandals at night. God was like a great Headmaster who made rules for His school, but the students never saw His face. Moses had received the Law for the school from God, and the Rabbis (like Gamaliel) as assistant masters in the school had added more laws, till now they were endless.

Saul had been so mad against Jesus and His followers, just because he believed that the Nazarenes were breaking all the rules of the great School of God —the School in which Saul was training to become an assistant master.

But now—Jesus was actually, radiantly, gloriously alive, and had met Saul, and Saul knew that in the face of Jesus he saw the face of the Head of the School Himself. And the Face was Love. The one rule in the whole School was the commandment, "Love one another."

"That commandment," Jesus had Himself said, "is all the Law."

The other great thoughts that came to Saul he will tell us himself later as we go over the seas and mountains with him. All we need remember now is that Jesus, the heroic, loving Son of God, fearless, pure and strong, stern to the proud, and tender and healing to the weak and sick, was now Saul's Hero and Saviour. Saul, henceforth, simply lived to fight his good fight under the stormy banner of Jesus Christ.

. . . . . .

As, after his long time of thinking and prayer, Saul again pulled his leather girdle tighter and started his walk back from Arabia to Damascus, he knew quite well that he was in for a long, perilous fight. The Jews would be as "exceedingly mad" against him as he himself had been against Stephen and the others. They would imprison, scourge, stone him. It would have been so easy to many men to slip away into some other part of the Roman empire and keep quiet; but not for Saul. He turned his face toward Damas-

cus and Jerusalem—the places where the hate against him would be hottest.

He walked across the desert again till, at last, he came to the walls of Damascus; and would see the soldier on sentry-go at the east gate—armed from head to foot. "I too" (Saul told himself) "must put on the armour."

"Hold your ground," he would say to himself, as he later said to others:

"Tighten the belt of truth about you;
"Wear straightness as your coat of mail;
"Have your feet shod with the strong shoes of peace;
"Take faith as your shield;
"Put the helmet of saving on your head,
"And grasp in your hand your broadsword—the Word of God."

So he passed in under that Damascus gate, through which he was never to come out again. For men who thirsted for his blood were soon to watch at all the gates of Damascus, day and night.

IX

THE TWO ESCAPES

SAUL lost no time in going to the Damascus synagogues and preaching that Jesus was the Son of God—to the amazement of his hearers.

"Can we believe our eyes and ears?" they asked one another. "Is this not the man who harried the people in Jerusalem who called on this Name; the very man who came here on purpose to carry them all off in chains to Caiaphas?"

Argument, protest, threats, only made Saul all the more vigorous. The disappointment and fury of the Jews living in Damascus grew ungovernable—Saul was a turncoat, a renegade, a traitor, a mad blasphemer. The word of the Law that Saul had turned against Stephen they now turned on him:

> "Your eye shall not pity him,
> You shall surely slay him."

They planned to assassinate him. Going to the King of the City (Aretas), who was ruling Damascus for the Roman Emperor, they managed to persuade him to set a guard against Saul's escaping. At every gate of the city stood figures, with deadly knife concealed, waiting for him. Day and night the grim, sleepless watch went on for the blood of Saul.

How could he escape? All round the city stretched

the high unbroken walls. It seemed that the life of Saul, like the life of Stephen, must end under a hail of stones. But, built right into and on the high, broad walls of Damascus city, were houses with windows that sometimes actually hung over the edge. The owner of one of these houses was a Nazarene. So a line of escape was planned. Under cover of the dark, and, shrouded in his Jewish travelling cloak, Saul climbed up and crept into the house of this disciple. He went into a room and peered out of the window.

All was silent save for the weird howl of a distant jackal on the edge of the orchards and the grunt of a sleeping camel. Overhead the stars made tiny quivering points in the intense darkness of the sky. Looking down through the blackness, Saul tried to gauge the depth from the window to the ground.

"Here are the rope and the basket," said one, pointing to a deep round rush basket with a stout rope tied to the strong handles.

They knelt down, and the voice of Saul rose in prayer to God for Damascus, for the men in the city who were trying to kill him and for his own safe journeying. The flickering flame of the little baked clay lamp was put out, so that no watcher should see them as they slung the basket from the window and Saul lowered himself into it.

Having listened for the last time for sign or sound of enemies, slowly, foot by foot they let down the basket. Saul, whose strong hands practised in tent-making knew how to grip a rope, held on tightly till he felt the ground under the basket. Stepping on to the ground and shaking the rope to give his

friends a farewell signal to draw in the basket again, he turned his face southward and set out through the darkness alone. By the time the dawn came up over his left shoulder he would have crossed the plain and reached the Place of Shining, where Jesus had come to Saul in that blaze of light on His way to Damascus.

He was going back to Jerusalem along the road up which we followed him when he came as the scourge of the Nazarenes. Now he was flying as the persecuted disciple of Jesus. He was stepping out of the dangers of Damascus into the greater perils of Jerusalem. As he went down past Hermon and came at last in sight of the silent hills, where the steep place of Gadara runs down into the shining, busy Lake, everything would seem different. Then the Sea of Galilee was, to him, the haunt of the Great Pretender; now it was the place where the Jesus, Who was Saul's Lord, had sailed and spoken.

> "Clear silver water in a cup of gold,
> Under the sunlit steeps of Gadara,
> It shines—His Lake—the Sea of Chinnereth—
> The waves He loved, the waves that kissed His feet
> So many blessed days. O happy waves!
> O little, silver, happy sea, far-famed,
> Under the sunlit steeps of Gadara."

Passing on through Samaria and the hills of Judæa he at length came out in sight of the walls of Jerusalem (the walls under which he had watched Stephen stoned), and of the roof of the Temple where Gamaliel still sat in honour among the Rabbis. Saul knew that the ferocity of hate which he himself had stirred

up among the strict Jews would now break out against himself. What he would hardly expect was that the Nazarene disciples themselves would give him the cold shoulder. Yet so it happened.

It was natural, after all, that they should be afraid of him. They knew of old the fiery Saul with his quick wit and his passion against the Nazarenes. Certainly he was now declaring that he belonged to their sect; was asking to join them as a baptised Nazarene, declaring that he had the Holy Spirit within him. But (they asked themselves) was it not just one more crafty attempt to spy out their lives and use the evidence as a witness for destroying them? So they held aloof from Saul; they were afraid of him. He was forsaken by Pharisee and Nazarene. He stood where his Master had stood—all alone.

There was in Jerusalem a man from Cyprus, a Jew with a face of great power and patience, older than Saul, called Barnabas. He was so enthusiastic as a Nazarene that he had sold the land he owned, and had given it into the common fund for helping the poorer disciples. Barnabas had wider ideas than some of the other Nazarenes in Jerusalem, so he went to Saul, and, after a talk with him, he was so convinced that he was a true disciple of Jesus that he took him to Peter and the other apostles (as the leaders whom Jesus had chosen were called).[1]

They all stood and sat round him, while with glowing face Saul told them the story you have read;—how, on the road to Damascus, Jesus had spoken to

[1] Apostle (from the Greek ἀπό στέλλω) means "one who is sent forth," like our word "missionary" from "mitto," I send.

him, and he had spoken about Jesus in Damascus, and the Jews had lain in wait to take and kill him. As they listened, Peter and John and James and the others could see in every line of Saul's face, in the passion in his eyes and could hear in the sound of his voice, that he was a follower of Jesus.

A slave of a great Roman (and there were many of them in such a city as Jerusalem) usually had a mark branded on his skin with a hot iron to show that he belonged to a certain master. There could be no mistake about it. Saul's whole character was now marked like that. As he said later himself:

"I bear branded on my body the owner's stamp of Jesus." [1]

Nor did Saul try to keep quiet for safety's sake. He went among the very people whom he had raised up against Stephen; into the synagogues where he himself had argued against Stephen, and there spoke with all his power for Jesus. The effect was electrical. Astonishment gave way to anger, anger deepened into hate, and in their hate, the Jews (even those from foreign lands) planned secretly to capture, imprison, and kill Saul. Someone—perhaps an old fellow-student of Saul's, who had heard them plotting against his life down in the Temple—told the apostles that Saul was to be killed.

What was to be done? Simon, Barnabas, Saul and the other friends got together for a talk. Damascus in the north and Jerusalem in the south (the two great cities of Syria and Palestine) were now closed to him. A highly educated graduate like Saul was

[1] Gal. vi. 17.

not well fitted—as the fiery fisherman Peter was—to speak to the village people among the hills and in the Lake-country. He must go out of the land—at any rate for the present. He would go home to Tarsus.

No sooner was the decision made than they prepared quietly to go part of the way with him. Filling their leather bottles and their food-scrips, the little band took up their cloaks and staves. They managed to get Saul unobserved past the Damascus gate out on to the northern road. He had made his second escape from his enemies.

Going north for some time, the road then forked to the left and carried them diagonally toward the coast. Resting at noon under the shelter of an olive tree, or at a rest-house, they tramped on for fifty miles, talking of their plans for the future. It may well be that, as they went down from the hills and came first in sight of the Great Sea shining away to the west, Barnabas would lay his hand on the shoulder of his younger friend, and tell Saul that the time would surely come when they two would go out together on a great campaign.

There ahead of them, Paul and his friends would see the columns of a marble temple that Herod had built on the rising ground. It was Cæsarea—the town of Cæsar—the Roman capital of Palestine. Coming over the low ridge they saw the stadium, and beyond it for nearly two miles the streets of Cæsarea, through which Saul made his way to the harbour-side.

In the harbour, protected from the gales of the sea by the great crescent-shaped breakwater, the rippling

water lapped against the sides of ships from Egypt and Rome, Athens and Cyprus, Tyre and Sidon and Tarsus. Over all and in the middle of the double-curved harbour the grim, strong Roman citadel was built.

Finding in harbour a ship bound for Tarsus, Saul took his passage home in her. Soon the rudder paddles were unlashed and the oar sweeps put out to row the ship from the harbour, round the tower at the breakwater end, into the open sea. The mainsail was hoisted; and Saul found himself coasting northward, past Ptolemais Tyre and Sidon, with the forests of masts in their harbours, on his way to his old home, Tarsus.

The last time he had taken that journey he was a confident young student with all the world of learning at his feet, a Law career before him. Now he was flying from the anger of the men who had thought of him as the rising star of their party at Jerusalem. Yet we can well believe that his whole being was as buoyant as the ship on whose deck he stood watching the sunset over the sea; for no persecution nor distance could separate him from his Unseen Companion—Whose he was and Whom he now lived to serve.

Gazing over the bow of the ship he saw, at length, the long low line of the plain where he was born, with the ridge of the mountains beyond. Right ahead was the mouth of the river. As they sailed into the estuary, the galley-men were ordered to their benches. The oars were loosed. The blades dipped and flashed in the water of the Cydnus, and the oars groaned as the ship slowly forged her way up-stream. Then the

river opened out into the Lake Harbour which Saul knew so well.

No sooner was she made fast at the harbour-side, than Saul would be ashore and making his way up into the City of Tarsus. We do not know whether his mother or father was alive to greet him. Certainly if his father was alive he—as a strict Pharisee—would be horrified at the new teaching that his son had accepted. There are some reasons to believe—though certainty is quite impossible—that his father was so furious that he turned Saul out of house and home into absolute poverty.

If he did this, it would come as a terrible, though not unexpected, blow to Saul. With all his own high temper, he was as sensitive as he was passionate. He would feel the wound of his father's anger like the cut of a whip. But he would turn his hands to the labour of tent-making, and his speech to the story of Jesus Christ. He was learning the secret of being content in plenty and hunger, in wealth and poverty.

"In Him Who strengthens me," he declared, "I am ready for anything."

X

THE QUEEN OF THE EAST

ONE day, some seven years later, a man came into the city of Tarsus with a look of inquiry in his eyes as he searched the faces of those who met him in the streets.

He was a traveller—a stranger to Tarsus; but that would not seem unusual to the people in that great city, where men from all parts of the world were going to and fro every day. He made inquiries among the Jews, and, at last, he was directed to the house where Saul was living. Saul, as his eyes turned to this strange visitor, would scan his face curiously for a moment, then:

"Barnabas!" Saul would cry, as he leapt to his feet to welcome his old comrade.

It was, indeed, that splendid Cypriote Jew, who, you remember, had years before sold his land for the great cause, and had been the first to grasp Saul's hand as he came a refugee from Damascus to cold Jerusalem.

When Barnabas had rested a little and washed after travel, the two comrades sat down to talk. Saul listened with growing eagerness as Barnabas told him why he had come to find him in Tarsus.

"I have come from Antioch in Syria," Barnabas would say. "Wonderful things are happening there.

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When I was at Jerusalem men came to us from Antioch with a strange story. They said that the Brethren from Cyprus and North Africa had been preaching in Antioch, not to the Jews only, but even to the Greeks. And the Greeks—many of them—have actually given up their gods of marble and ivory and silver and have turned and become disciples.

"So I went up through the country all the way to Antioch and told them to grip hold of the faith with all their power.

"But there are so many of them in Antioch that I am not able to give them all the teaching in the Way that they need. And there are many, many more to be shown the Way and the Truth. So I have come for you to join me and help me. Will you come?"

Saul's heart, hand and voice must all have leapt in response. Would he go? Why, this was the great call he had been listening for throughout all the seven years of waiting, the years of quiet work in and round Tarsus.

Rolling up his mat and cloak, and getting his wallet and bottle and staff, he would swiftly get ready to start with Barnabas back to Antioch. We cannot tell by which route they went, for they could go by sea or by land. If they took ship in the harbour, they would be rowed down on the stream. Bearing south-east, when they reached the open sea, the coasting vessel would scud across the gulf, heading for the Syrian coast. All day she would sail, and by the time the purple sunset was lighting the tapering cone of Mount Cassius till it glowed like a torch, they would

run in between the towers of the Seleucia breakwaters into the outer port, and thence to the inner basin of the calabash-shaped harbour.

In the morning the two comrades would be out by dawn from the harbour-city of Seleucia to start their tramp of sixteen miles up the road that led from the port to the metropolis—Antioch. On the right of this road was the River Orontes curving like a serpent along the plain.

If they went from Tarsus by land they would trudge by the great road round the head of the gulf, the road by which Alexander the Great and Xenophon had both passed with their armies.

The muleteers and camel-drivers would find themselves outstripped by these two travelling Jews, who strode along with cloaks over shoulders and robes girt under their leather belts, in order to give their legs freedom for walking.

Saul's face would glow and his eyes gleam with sheer happiness. He was on his way to one of the three greatest cities of the world, tramping by the side of his friend Barnabas, on the service of Him for Whom he was quite ready to die and in Whom he gloried to live. And this was only to be a beginning of adventures. No wonder Saul rejoiced.

As they walked on, Barnabas would tell Saul that it was not to be all plain sailing for them in their work at Antioch.

"These Greeks," he would say, "have the Spirit in them. They walk in the Way. But the strict Jews among the Brethren (especially down at Jerusalem) say that these newcomers must be circumcised (i.e.

they must become Jews) before they can really join us. I say 'No.' What do you think?"

It does not seem to us at first sight very exciting to know whether Saul said "Yes" or "No." Yet, if he had disagreed with Barnabas, the whole history of the world might have been different, and our own land (and therefore we, ourselves) might never have heard of Jesus. For the followers of Jesus—if Saul had sided with the stricter Jew-Nazarenes—might well have become a narrow little Jewish clique.

What was Saul's answer? From the words that he wrote later we know he would say something like this:

"The Good News about Jesus is the saving power both to the Jew and the Greek. The great thing is—not that men should be circumcised, but that each should dedicate his whole body to God, as the Temple of His Spirit."

In such talk about the great work in front of them, Barnabas and his younger colleague Saul would at last come out in sight of the walls of Antioch. Passing by lovely groves of myrtle and other trees, the road curved southward just where it came out on the bridge whose four round arches spanned the greatest stream in all Syria—the Orontes River.

In front of Saul, as he set foot on the bridge, was the frowning wall which the Romans had built all along the river front, and round the whole city. To his left, outside the walls, lay the marble, open-air Hippodrome. Over the turreted walls, and beyond the plain on which the city spread itself, he saw away to the south the high bluffs and crests of mountains—

especially the stern Mount Sulpius, where the goats leapt up the ravines.

Over the shoulder of this mountain the Roman wall ran, dropping into defiles and leaping again up the hillside to the square, forbidding mass of the citadel, where the soldiers' bugles sounded the change of sentries. The wall ran on, past the citadel, till it dropped into the plain and swept round, completing the circle on the bank of the Orontes at the bridge where Saul stood.

Barnabas and Saul walked across the bridge—which was the first of five bridges that crossed the River Orontes at Antioch, and joined the city to the royal island suburb, where the palace and buildings of the Roman nobles glittered in the sunshine. Passing through the gateway in the city wall, the travellers came at once on all the hum and bustle of Antioch.

In the centre of the city they walked into the most wonderful street in the world of that day. For four miles it stretched east and west, one shining colonnade of white marble. It had been built by Herod. Roman ladies in swinging palanquins borne by slaves, shielded by dainty curtains from the sun and from the dust of the streets; and droves of mules bearing figs from Cyprus, splendid carvings from Greece, books from the learned cities of North Africa, or purple cloth from the world-famed dyers of Tyre, met caravans of dromedaries tired from their long march over the sands from beyond the Euphrates and grunting under their loads of Persian silks and of dates.

At the very centre of the city where the great street from the Palace crossed Herod's street of marble,

Saul came on the city square, where a noble statue of Apollo stood for the worship of the Romans.

"Here is Saul the Tarsian," Barnabas would tell the other Brothers when at last Saul reached Barnabas' home.

The leaders would gather to meet this new young colleague—men like Black Simeon, Lucius from Cyrene in North Africa, and Manaen (who was related to Herod). They all greeted the new comrade, and would soon find that Saul, though he was not a big, tall man, nor very striking to look at, was a far abler speaker than their old friend Barnabas. But Saul, with his dashing temper, had not yet grown so steady and wise as his comrade. One wonderful thing they noticed was the strange intense power of his look, when he fixed his eyes on you and spoke.

As Saul went along Herod's marble street he would notice many of the most richly dressed people going through the west gate of the city.

"That is the Daphne gate," they told him.

As he went through the gate he came out on a broad road lined with splendid Roman villas with mosaic courtyards, in which fountains were throwing water from the heads of carved dolphins into marble basins. Paths led out among shaded woods, which spread over ten miles of country where running waters tinkled down the glens past a marble temple, whose pillars could be seen through the trees in a green open space. In the temple was a mighty statue of Apollo, the God of Light, pouring wine from a golden goblet.[1]

[1] For description of Daphne see Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* chap. xxiii.

The white bodies of bathers were splashing in the water, breaking into shining ripples the dappled surface of sunshine and green shadow. It all looked beautiful; and yet, when Saul saw the worshippers round the marble statue, he could see from their loose lips and the flabby faces of many of them, and from their leering looks and foul actions, that the whole worship was—like the life at Antioch—the glittering surface of a poisonous pool. The languorous coarseness of the East had mixed with the physical beauty of the Greek and the brute strength of the Roman to make the temple festivals scenes of beastliness.

As Saul walked back through the groves and into Antioch he would see that in all this wide-spreading city of the Plain of Sunshine everyone seemed to be set on making all the money that he could and then spending it on pleasures. She was rightly called "the Heathen Queen"—Antioch the Beautiful—with her head on the mountain crowned with the citadel and with the river running at her feet.

The Antiochenes liked to see sport, but were too slack and flabby to go in for athletic games themselves. They paid gladiators—great prize-fighting giants—to kill each other and to fight with lions for their amusement. Slaves carried the rich citizens down to the Hippodrome, and fanned them, while they watched the shouting charioteers cracking their whips as they urged the straining and steaming horses, white with foam, round the oval track.

As Saul passed along the street he saw a boy with a flask of oil and a measure of wheat going toward a little temple; making his offering to the idol Apollo.

And he would hardly know how to hold himself. There was the statue of Apollo, whom the Antiochenes specially worshipped, exquisitely graceful, "faultily faultless, icily regular"; a god whose story was interesting, but could help no boy to keep his life clean. Saul wanted to tell that boy of his own living Hero, strong and resolute, who alone could lead that boy into the full stature of manhood.

Saul looked out over the people there before him, going up and down in the street. He saw some curious, some hard and sneering, some thirsty in spirit; olive-faced, black-haired Jewish lads, straight from the synagogue school; black negroes and bronze Egyptians from up the valley of the Nile, sturdy Romans with the pride of the all-conquering Eagle of the Empire in every gesture and in the lines of their arrogant faces; Greek merchants, swift to drive a bargain, yet often outwitted by those slow, silent Arabs whose faces fringed the crowd—sun-scorched and mysterious as the tawny desert from which they came.

As he looked over the sea of faces, Saul would see that, with all their differences of colour of skin, of language and country, these people all had a great dumb need—groping after God if haply they might find Him. He would feel

> "Then with a rush the intolerable craving
> Shivers throughout me like a trumpet call.
> O to save these! to perish for their saving!
> Die for their life, be offered for them all!"

Saul knew by this time that the Good News of Jesus Christ was not only for his own people, the Jews. There in Antioch was young Titus, the Greek,

and many others who worshipped Christ. Indeed, the people of Antioch began to see that these strange new people had only one common bond—they were not of one race, or class; but they all worshipped a new God—an unseen Person Who, they declared, dwelt in them, named Jesus Christ.

"They are Christians," said one man to another in the crowd, as they saw Saul and Barnabas pass along the street.

So the Nazarenes were first called "Christians" in Antioch.

XI

THE CALL ABROAD

IN the cool, dark room of a house in Antioch, after the work of the day, Barnabas and Saul and some friends gathered for their evening meal.

Tired as they were, they felt the glow that comes at the end of a day filled, in each strenuous minute, with work on a task for which they greatly care. But one thing was lacking. If only Jesus could be there to say of the day's work: "Well done, comrades!"

Peter and the others had told Barnabas at Jerusalem that—on the very last day before Jesus was crucified—He had supper with His friends. At the supper He broke bread and poured out wine from the cup and said:

"Do this in remembrance of Me,"

and then, as He saw their crestfallen looks at the thought of His leaving them, He tried to cheer them.

"The world will see Me no more, but you will see Me," He said.

So in Antioch at their Supper, Barnabas and Saul and the others broke the thin loaves, handed the pieces of bread to one another, and passed the cup from hand to hand round the table in remembrance of Jesus

Christ. As they did this and spoke of Him, they knew that He was really there in the fellowship with them.

> "Nearer to them than breathing,
> Closer than hands and feet."

If any one of them broke out into anger with another one in the heat and rush of the day's work, he made it up at the Supper, and they were friends again. They remembered too, that many others of their friends in distant places were, at that same hour, breaking the bread and drinking the cup at the common table.

Some of their comrades were at Jerusalem, and many in the little white villages in the country. Some sat down to supper after washing the stain of the fishing-nets from their hands at the side of the Lake of Galilee, while others had gone home from working on ships in the thronged harbour of Sidon or from the purple dyeing-sheds at Tyre. There were more fellow-Christians across the sea, trudging home from the fig orchards on the lovely island of Cyprus, and others from tending the goats on the hills behind Tarsus.

So Saul and Barnabas and the others at their Supper in Antioch asked God for good to come to all these Brethren wherever they were. The words in which they prayed were something like these:

"As this broken bread was scattered as corn upon the mountains; and, gathered together, became one;

"So let Thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into Thy religion,

"For Thine is the glory and power, through Jesus Christ, for ever." [1]

. . . . . .

One day a number of the Brethren came to Antioch all tired and dusty. They had travelled all the way up through Palestine and Syria to Antioch.

Among them was a man named Agabus, who had the gift of telling the future.

"There is going to be a great famine," he said to the others. "Our brothers in Judæa will be starving."

What was to be done? They could not stand by in Antioch and see their friends die of hunger.

"We must save up a fund of money, so that we can buy food for them when the famine comes."

So the disciples put aside money from their income —each giving as he was able to afford. The money was to go to Jews; but the Greek disciples in Antioch as well as the Jews would give their money, for since they became disciples of Jesus Christ the great barrier was broken down between Jew and Greek.

When enough money had been collected, it was handed over to Barnabas and Saul. The young Greek Titus was also sent to help them. A Greek Christian going with the two Jews would help to show the Jewish disciples at Jerusalem what they had not yet realised, that it was not necessary to be a Jew in order to be a Christian.

They spent the money in corn, and perhaps figs from Cyprus and dates, and then started out with their precious burden. They might row down the

[1] The Teaching of the Twelve.

Orontes or ride along the road as far as Seleucia harbour, and then (taking ship) sail down the coast to the harbour at Cæsarea.

As Saul came, at last, in sight of Jerusalem it must have seemed strange to be coming back after nine years into the city from which he had been obliged to flee for his life. Nine years ago (he remembered) even the disciples at Jerusalem had shunned him, because they thought that their old persecutor was only pretending to be a friend. Now he was coming again to these very people who had been afraid of him, and was bringing with him food that meant life to them and their boys and girls.

It sickened Saul, however, in Jerusalem to find that, with all his training as a Jewish scholar under that great master, Gamaliel, he could not get his brother Jews who were not Christians even to listen to him. Indeed, the fact that he had been the rising hope of the Pharisees only made them more furious.

"Listen to a turncoat traitor, with his pretended 'visions,' talking his everlasting blasphemies about Jesus; hear him declaring that he gloried in the accursed cross! No!"

They spat with disgust and anger.

It was in the lovely courts of the Temple itself that Saul would feel most of all that he was against a stone wall. To walk where he had once studied and to see there groups of young students whispering to one another as they glanced at him with sneering looks —to be an "outsider" in the cloisters of his own old college—that cut to his heart, indeed.

In the Temple court, Saul looked up to the sky

above and prayed. In that hour there came to him (as clearly as that other vision of Jesus had come years before) a vision and a Voice. And the Voice said:

"I have called you to leave the Jews and go as My missionary to the Peoples."

. . . . . .

In Jerusalem, Saul may well have stayed at the house of a relative of Barnabas, named Mark, whose son John was eager to go out from Jerusalem into the wider world. So, when they had finished their work of taking food to the famine-stricken people, young John started out with Barnabas and Saul on the journey back north to Antioch. John Mark was, in all likelihood, like his uncle Barnabas, a native of Cyprus.

As they tramped their way northward, Saul and Barnabas would talk over that trance-vision which Saul had had in the Temple. The Voice had said, "I have called you to go as My missionary to the Peoples."

To leave his own people, to go to others—where would it all lead? Saul and Barnabas would dream great dreams together, as they talked; but none of their visions of the future was to be so wonderful as the great adventures they were really to meet.

At last they were back once more within the walls of "The Heathen Queen" city, and were soon telling Simeon, Manaen, Lucius, and the others in Antioch all the news of Jerusalem. Saul told them of the Voice that said he was to go to the other nations. As they talked together and then waited in silence, the Spirit within led them all to see that they must send

some of their number right away to the far-off countries to spread the Good News.

They were not to keep their best men at home. They, the Brethren of the despised sect of the Nazarenes, were sending out the first missionaries to face the two greatest and most wonderful things the world had ever seen,—the religion of the Hebrew people and the power and organization of the Roman Empire. The work abroad called for the finest brain, the best scholarship, the ripest experience. Barnabas, the trusted leader, and Saul, the fiery, swift-tongued University graduate, must go from them.

They all met together and prayed, and then the Christian folk laid their hands on Barnabas and Saul. This showed that the missionaries were going out as their men.

Saul, as he lay down on his bed on the floor that night, knew that he was in the morning to start on a new adventure. He did not know that the next day's tramp would be the beginning of long marches in which he would hunger and thirst; and would be stripped and buffeted and have no certain dwelling-place; and labour, working with his own hands. He was at the beginning of many journeys over seas and mountains, wide, weary plains and crowded cities—wanderings that would never cease until they ended for ever.

BOOK II

THE FORWARD TREAD

"And in the strength of this he rode,
Scattering all evil customs everywhere
. . . and in the strength of this
Came victor."

THE CITIES OF PAUL'S EARLY LIFE

XII

THE ISLAND ADVENTURE

THE keenness of early spring was in the breeze and sparkled on the Great Sea as the ship nosed her way westward out of the harbour of Seleucia. And it was spring in the heart of Saul as he sailed out on his new Great Sea of Adventure.

From the stern of the ship he waved to the swiftly lessening figures on the end of the stone breakwater. Then he turned and walked to the bow of the boat, where, in the clear March morning, Cyprus lay like a cloud on the horizon.

The ship slid from the bright crest of a rolling wave down into the darker trough. But always her bows lifted and she came to the summit again, and shook the spray from her sides. Saul's spirit, too, would rise and fall between the joy of the new quest on which he was starting,

"the rapture of the forward view,"

and a shrinking doubt of the darker unknown to be explored.

As they ran westward, the ship would meet others —swift, high-peaked ships carrying fruits from Cyprus to Antioch. South of them heavy tramp-ships slowly crept east, carrying copper from Cyprus to the Phœnician coast.

Barnabas, however, eager to show Saul the place of his birth, drew him from these things to catch the first glimpse of the city of Salamis. So the comrades stood at the bow, steadying themselves against the ship's bulwarks, their eyes gazing over the sea. They would talk over plans, while their young attendant, John Mark, stood quietly behind them.

First they saw, thrust out into the sea, like the snout of a giant sword-fish, the long peninsula of the Karpass. Soon they came under the lee of its rocks. Stretching away on the north side of Salamis, this ridge of mountain-tops in the sea protected both the harbour and the city from the boisterous winds from Asia Minor. Ahead of them, Barnabas and Saul could now see, above the long line of white-edged waves and the greyish yellow sand, silhouetted against the setting sun, the walls of the city and the roof of a great temple.

Then the ship was steered into the large harbour. She threaded her way through the crowded shipping —vessels from the coast of Africa, from Greece and Rome, as well as from Tyre and Seleucia.

An order was shouted, followed by the creaking of cordage through the pulleys, and the rattle of rings on the mast. The sail was furled and the ship brought up at her berth on a taut cable.

Barnabas leapt ashore to be greeted by his own people—his relatives, and men of Salamis whom he had known as a boy. He introduced his comrade Paul to these. The Christians among them (for the Faith had already spread to Cyprus) would look with curiosity at this man who, from being a stormy persecutor

of the followers of Jesus, had become a fighting leader in His new Kingdom.

Threading their way through the sailors of all nations and the harbour-loungers, past the groups of fruit-packers and the brawny porters, Barnabas would lead Saul to the house of one of his relatives to plan the things they were to do in Cyprus.

As Saul went about the Roman city, going from synagogue to synagogue with Barnabas, speaking to the people of the coming, at last, of the long-expected Messiah, he would see many things that were familiar to him. For Salamis was a Roman city, and like Tarsus and Antioch, it was spread over a plain with mountains in sight.

In Salamis (as in Antioch and Tarsus) Saul saw the marble temples lifting the perfect beauty of Greek craftsmanship bfore him. Standing on the city wall he could see the long, sturdy Roman aqueduct spanning the plain with its arches. Here, as in many other cities where he had worked and was to work—for instance, Lystra and Iconium, Ephesus and Athens and Corinth —he heard the clanking footstep of the Roman soldier on sentry-go—all armed with broad-sword and shield and brazen-crested helmet.

Yet in Salamis—and, indeed, in all the cities—he saw a strange something that he could not describe, which neither belonged to Greece nor to Rome. He saw it in the long line of camels slowly crossing the plain led by a hooded, silent figure. It came to him as he noticed the patient oxen pulling the wooden plough through the soil between the olive trees, or as he

watched a quiet figure seated cross-legged on the ground—motionless, meditating.

It was the Spirit of the East.

The East would never make great roads like Rome, nor plan her noble aqueducts, and did not dream of creating such dramas as Sophocles wrote to be played in splendid marble theatres open to the blue sky. Nor did it weave spells of glorious oratory such as had thrilled the Roman senate from the lips of Cicero. The East gazed in puzzled wonder at the wild energy of the chariot-races and of the wrestling and fighting gladiators.

> "She saw the legions thunder past,
> And plunged in thought again."

Rome scorned the East for her slackness, and Greece proudly looked at her own Parthenon and her poets and thought that the Oriental had nothing that compared with these.

Yet, when the last column of the Greek temple in Roman Salamis had tumbled in ruin and was covered with sand, and the greatest theatre of Greece has become a terrace of wild flowers, the camel would still go across the Cyprus plain led by a hooded figure. The East would remain.

It was a part of the greatness of Saul that, while his conquering mind leapt to the power of the Roman rule, and his quick wit and brilliant speech excelled even that of the Greek, his heart was the patient brooding heart of the East, searching the deep things.

So Barnabas and he, speaking in Greek to the people (for the Hellenised Jews who were spread all over the

Roman Empire spoke Greek in most of the cities), went from Salamis out across the plain. The corn was, by this time, covering all the brown earth with green. They walked westward from end to end of the island, climbing grey hills where the wild goats leaped, and dropping down long, winding valleys to fishing towns on the seashore. They would see men mining in the red hillsides for the copper for which the island was famous all the world over; and would pass through groves of fig and olive trees.

On their right rose a mighty peak from which the snows were now melting fast—the peak of Mount Olympus, where, they said, the gods held counsel together. In the clear blue of a sultry noon when they rested and took their food on a hill-crest, they could see the Great Sea gleaming in the distance, and, right beyond, on the very edge of the world, away to the north, the white rim of the Taurus mountains.

Perhaps Barnabas would tell Saul a story which all the people in Cyprus knew and which most of them believed.

Down there, out of the foam of the waves (they said), a lovely goddess was born, named Aphrodite. She came ashore in a shell and has lived in Cyprus ever since. She is the goddess of love and beauty.

As they talked, looking out over the sea, where men said the goddess was born, the sun slipped lower and the light paled, changing from the deep full blue of the Mediterranean through shades of light blue to blue-grey and then to a glimmering pearl.

Over a hill-crest there swept in threatening circles

a pair of royal eagles, while across a valley a hunting party of vultures floated to and fro in search of prey. So Saul and Barnabas walked across the hills and down a great valley that looked like a theatre of the gods, where the silence was only broken by the sound of running water, and the cry of a herd-boy to his goats.

At last they came out on the low plateau that leads to Paphos. Here they might well see the people coming out along the road to worship at the temple of Aphrodite. Saul would remember how at Antioch, Apollo, the god of light, was worshipped; and here in Cyprus, Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty. And he burned to tell these people of the only true God, Who was truly the God of Light and Love, and also (unlike the Apollo and Aphrodite whose legends tell of impurity and treachery) a God who was holy and utterly true to His word.

As we shall see plainly later, Saul never attacked other religions that were reaching, however blindly, after the unseen God. But he did attack the worship of idols that limited the omnipotent God to cold marble or to wood or metal; and he loathed all religious trickery. All unknown to himself, he was now on the eve of an adventure where he was to smite a great blow against a religious charlatan.

Barnabas and he, as they walked on to the city, ahead of them, saw along the road people coming and going to and from the Roman capital of the island—the centre of the government. The soldiers, the proud Roman dames borne in palanquins on the shoulders of slaves, the straight paved road leading down to the city where the citadel and the proconsul's palace were

already in sight, showed them that they were nearing Paphos.

They went in through the city gates to the streets within the walls, where they found more Romans than in any other part of the island. For this was the capital where the Roman proconsul, Sergius Paulus, lived.

Barnabas and Saul passed, as they had done at each town throughout the whole island, under the portico of the doorway that bore a carving of grapes and vine-leaves—the Hebrew synagogue. Barnabas, who would be known to the Jews as one of their own race, and a native of Cyprus, introduced his younger comrade, Saul, who would then speak out the great news that they were travelling to give; that the Messiah had come, that God had really now spoken in a Son named Jesus.[1]

When Saul stood up and began to pour out in speech that marvellous blend of flaming passion and closely-knit argument based on the history of the people (of which he was the master), it was as though some brilliant general had hurled a regiment of charging cavalry into the lines of the enemy. You might fight against Saul or be convinced by his argument. The one thing you could not do was to ignore him.

When the people went out, therefore, from the cool shadows of the synagogue into the hot glare of the streets, they talked to one another of this strange doctrine. Teachers had often come to Paphos speaking of strange ideas from the East and deep philosophy

[1] The kind of argument that Saul used in Jewish synagogues we shall read in the next chapter.

from Greece. They were interesting, but this was something more—for if what Saul said was true, that God had now shown for the first time completely the Way to Himself, then all their lives were changed.

From lip to lip the story of these strange teachers passed. The attendants at the palace of Sergius Paulus, the proconsul, began to hear of it. They knew that their master enjoyed listening to new teachings, for he was quite above the ordinary level of Roman proconsuls in his keen interest in thought.

"Send to the men and ask them to come and speak to me of these things," he ordered.

The invitation was in itself a royal command.

Barnabas and Saul were led, into the presence of the proconsul, through the courtyards, where fountains played in the sunshine and kept the air cool. Round him were his courtiers and personal guards. Among them was a dark-haired Jew named Bar-jesus, a name which means "Son of a Saviour." He was a wizard of the East, who knew mysterious incantations and professed to read the future by means of the stars. He could perform marvels and bend the wills of men to his own by hypnotic powers. All round the Great Sea in all the cities of the Roman Empire were men like this sorcerer, who put manacles on the minds of men by their great powers of magic. One great Roman general, for instance, fell so low as to conduct all his campaigns on the advice of an Oriental fortune-telling woman. This wizard, Bar-jesus, was in the Court of Sergius Paulus because he was trying to get power over the man who was supreme in all Cyprus.

As he saw these two fellow-Jews walking up the marble floor of the hall to face Sergius Paulus, Barjesus looked at them closely. But he hardly imagined that these mere travelling talkers could have any effect on his own power at the Roman Court.

Sergius Paulus told Barnabas and Saul that he had heard of their teaching from others, but wished to know more about it from themselves.

Then Saul stood forward. This was something that had never come to him before. He had been a Jew speaking to Jews. Barnabas had been the leader through Cyprus. It was he who introduced Saul to the Jews as they came to each new town by the seashore or among the folds of the hills. To-day all that was changed. Saul was a Roman speaking in the presence of the man who stood—in all Cyprus—for the mighty power of that empire of which Saul was a citizen.

"Saul!" No, not Saul the Jew now, but Paul the Roman. He himself was called by the same name as this Roman proconsul, Sergius Paulus, to whom he was now telling the new knowledge of the nature of God as shown in Jesus Christ with all the learning of the Jewish graduate, and talking in Greek, the language of cultivated men throughout the imperial cities of the Great Sea.

What did Paul say? We cannot know exactly. But as Sergius Paulus had heard of him as one who told of the character of God and the way He dealt with men, we can well believe that Paul would follow something like the argument that he used later in a letter.

"All things that have been made, in the sky and on the earth, the things that we can see and cannot see—all the rule of kings and the unseen powers have been created by God. And He has poured all that He is into the life of one Jesus Christ Who rescues us from the power of Darkness and carries us into the Realm of Light.

"He is the Head of every unseen Power, supreme over even those dark powers that the magician exercises. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in Him. Beware of anyone getting hold of you by means of a make-believe spiritualism. It is in Christ alone that all God's fullness is.

"Living in Him we put to death impurity, low appetites, evil desires—the things which bring down the anger of God on disobedient sons. Off with them all now—anger, rage, malice, slander, foul talk! We aim at what is above, for our life is hidden with Christ in God."

Eagerly Sergius Paulus leaned forward to hear the fascinating speech of this new teacher. The proconsul was a man of brain and judgment; and he could see that facing him was one who had a spacious daring mind. It was like glorious sunlight after the choking smoke of the midnight incantations of that sorcerer, Bar-jesus, who stood listening to Paul.

Elymas, the "wise" (as Bar-jesus arrogantly called himself) looked at Sergius Paulus and saw how pleased he was with Paul's teaching. The sorcerer's brow lowered, his face glowed with anger. His power was in peril, all his influence was at stake. If

Paul won the Roman ruler, then Elymas' career was at an end.

Impulsively he stepped forward and began to try to draw the mind of Sergius Paulus away. Paul's hot blood was up immediately. He turned his eyes on Elymas, and said:

"You son of the devil (though called Bar-jesus, Son of a Saviour), you enemy of all good, full of craftiness and cunning, will you never stop twisting the straight paths of the Lord?

"See here, the Lord's hand will fall on you and you will be blind, unable to see the sun for a time."

The figures of Paul and Barnabas, the proconsul, the marble columns, the shining light—all faded. Elymas, the sorcerer, was blind. They saw his hands grope, his sightless eyes turning vainly round. Someone took him by the hand and led him away.

Paul had won his spurs in a new field. He saw the deadly influence of this magician trying to drug the brain and spirit of Sergius Paulus.

In his first battle, Paul had routed magic and had won the Roman ruler to the strong and knightly vision that belongs to a good soldier of Christ.

XIII

FROM LOWLAND TO HIGHLAND

ONE morning Paul and Barnabas with John Mark walked down to the snug harbour that lay below the city of Paphos. In the circle made by the embracing arms of the stone breakwaters some little ships rocked on the water.

The deck of one of them was busy with preparations for sailing. The three travellers went aboard, the crew weighed anchor, and the boat slipped out through the harbour-mouth into the open sea. Skirting the treacherous ledge of rock which (as the sailors knew) lay just under the shining surface of the sea outside the harbour, they laid a course to the north-west.

The boat slipped westward at first, bearing north round the curve of the coast as the sun lifted astern above Mount Olympus. When they sailed months before to Cyprus from Seleucia, they saw away to the north the white ridge of the Taurus range behind the Cilician plain on which Paul was born. For at that time the snows were not melted and the air was clear. But now full summer had come; the snows above were melted and the air had the haze of heat in it.

All day long the ship sailed, and through the night. She was bound for Perga on the coast of Pamphylia,

farther westward than Cilicia. If the breeze was with her, she would at dawn make the Gulf of Attalia, which swept out to sea in two great arms of hills protecting a plain. As the mists of morning lifted, Paul would see, far ahead beyond the plain, the grey heights of the Taurus. In the centre of the bay the sea was coloured with the running waters of a river—the Cestrus. The river, carefully banked with stone and with wood-baulks, would remind Paul of his well-beloved Cydnus. For Perga was like Tarsus, in that it lay some miles up from the actual mouth of the river.

The ship's oars were swung out, and dipped and flashed as the crew pulled the vessel upstream. It took over an hour's rowing to bring them up to the harbour of Perga, where the city lay in the blazing sun sheltered between the forest-covered hills, with the damp air rising from her river.

Even the stadium and the theatre would be deserted. For Paul and his companions had come at the time of year when the people of Perga moved out from the city up into their suburb among the hills. He remembered how in the blazing summer time they used to do the same when he was a boy at Tarsus. The Pergans loved their wooded hills, and out behind the city they had built a lovely temple to Diana, the huntress of the gods, with her bow and quiver of arrows.

Paul came fresh from the open sea into the moist heat of the Pamphylian coast. As day wore on to evening a dank mist rose. A dull, purple, poisonous haze spread stealthily over the low coastland as the

horizon cut the sun's rim. The air was filled with the wearisome singing of mosquitoes and the hum of flies. Frogs kept up an unceasing chorus in the marshes. The sultry heat gave place to a miasma, which sent its damp chill even through Paul's cloak.

The towering Taurus mountains above the plain kept away—like a rampart—the fresh, clean, invading breezes of the north. The foul malaria of the marshes, creeping along the coast-line like unclean ghosts, struck Paul. Nowhere on the Mediterranean coast is the pestilence of fever so dreaded as on this spot. And Paul was, it seems, smitten with fever here at Perga.[1]

What was he to do? To stay there on that stricken Pamphylian plain was to leave his body a prey to the shivering agonies of fever without any advantage—for he could do no work there. Should he go back?—the thought would find no anchorage in the minds of men of the temper of Paul and Barnabas. But ahead of them lay the steep mountain ascents, and, beyond their ridge, the high, dry bracing air of the great plateau with its Roman cities, and the great Roman highway that ran from east to west.

Paul, in Cyprus, had begun to win the Roman power when he convinced Sergius Paulus. Why not go further with the campaign? They held a consultation and decided to press forward, though John Mark shrank from the adventure—for he turned back and sailed home again to Syria.

[1] For the reasons for believing that Paul caught a fever on the Pamphylian plain, see Ramsay's *St. Paul, the Traveller and Roman Citizen,* pages 89-97.

Turning their backs on the sea, Paul and Barnabas breasted the foot-hills, where the almond trees had already dropped their blossom in a snowstorm of white petals. Paul would ride on an ass, and from time to time try to walk, feebly at first, and often needing to rest on a boulder by a mountain-pool, where the gentle, brown water waited to refresh him. But as he felt the rock under his feet and drew the keener air of the hills among the pines, new life came with each deep breath. His step was more certain and firm, his eye quickened.

They climbed by the sides of ravines, where tumbling waters splashed down in torrents toward the Great Sea, whose blue grew dimmer in the distance each time they rested to look back.

They had left the peril of fever—but a new danger was all about them—the peril of robbers. Many fierce brigands hid among the grim, grey fastnesses of these Pisidian highlands in the rocky caverns under the pines. These bronzed robbers ambushed themselves, and then leapt down the sides of the ravine like wild goats. They sprang out and held up the caravans of merchandise that toiled up this path to the cities on the upper plains.

Once out among the upper Pisidian hills, with the ridge of the Taurus behind them, all would be well with Paul and Barnabas, for the Romans had just made a new road, of which they were so proud that they called it the Royal Road. Its freshly paved length ran from Pisidian Antioch[1] eastward and southward

[1] Not the Antioch of Syria. They were named alike because they were both founded by the same Emperor.

(joining up with the Roman colony of Lystra) on purpose to make it easy to send soldiers along to put down these robbers.

The two travellers were, however, not yet out upon this open land. And the steep defiles of the Taurus, where only a mule-track ran, were still the happy hunting-ground of the brigands. Paul himself tells us—just in a sentence—how he was "in peril of robbers." This journey from Perga up the mountain-side through the Pisidian country to Antioch,[1] is one where Paul may well have been seized and robbed by brigands, springing out from behind the boulders of a hillside or out from the cleft of a tiny stream.

At last Paul and Barnabas crested the Taurus ridge itself and looked down on the rolling plains spread before them. Behind them the steep mountains ran down southward five thousand feet to the ocean from which they had climbed; but in front the hills only dropped less than a thousand feet to the wonderful shining tableland.

Paul and Barnabas worked northward, and crossed the purple and brown foot-hills of the Taurus. At last they came in sight of a great aqueduct, whose arches ran across the plain like a string of giant camels turned to stone by magic as they carried water across the land.

The aqueduct ran to a beautiful city, set on the sides of a rocky hill. On the shoulder of the hill was

[1] I stayed in February, 1914, with an old Turk living at Antioch in Pisidia (Yalovatch) who, only a few years before, had been held up by brigands in the hills close to Antioch, and had himself shot one of them.

a temple, cut in the living rock, and before it a portico of marble with carvings of bulls' heads hung with garlands. But—away from the temple—there was a smaller, plainer building with no carving on it—yet strong in its simplicity. It was here and not to the temple that Paul and Barnabas went. It was the meeting-house of the Jews of Antioch.

Having entered, Paul and Barnabas sat down quietly to join in the Sabbath worship. The lessons were read from the Law of Moses[1] and from one of the prophets. The chief men in the synagogue saw, from the dress and the ways of the two strangers, that these travellers were Hebrews like themselves. They would, for instance, have over their heads the wrap which all the Jews put on when entering the synagogue. So they said to them:

"You men, and—as we see—brother-Jews, if you have any word to encourage the people here, say on."

Barnabas was not so good a speaker as Paul; so Paul stood up and said, with a sweep of his arm:

"Men of Israel and you who fear God, give ear."

He used this double form of address on purpose; because, beside the real Jews—"the men of Israel"—there were many Greeks who found in the worship of Jehovah something great and real, a dignity and clean strength that gripped them more than the temple worship of gods of marble. So these Greeks he spoke to as "those who fear God."

The boys in the synagogue would look at Paul at first, because he was someone new and strange. But

[1] It seems probable that the lessons that day were Deut. I. and Isaiah I.

soon their eyes were glued to him, partly by that strange fascination which a man always exercises who is ready to meet any adventure or peril to reach a high end, and partly because he began to tell again the heroic story that these Jewish boys knew so well.

He pictured the great "trek" from Egypt across the desolate wilderness over Jordan to the freedom of the plain of Jericho and of the hills about Jerusalem. They saw again, through Paul's eyes, the boy Samuel growing up to be their wise old ruler, and then the coming of the giant king Saul and the shepherd David on the throne. He showed how all this was leading up to something—from the tents in the desert to the city in the hills, from the simple rule of Samuel to the greater rule needed by a nation among nations—the rule of kings.

It was leading to what? The coming—how all of them were waiting for the greatest King to come! Then suddenly Paul sprang it upon them—the Good News that would take away their breath. God had actually already sent His forerunner, the blazing forth-teller, John the Baptist, and now the Messiah of God Himself—Jesus the Christ—had come!

"The Jews in Jerusalem," Paul went on, "though they could not find Him guilty of any crime, begged Pilate to have Him put to death. They hanged Him on the gibbet-cross and buried Him. But God raised Him from the dead. And many of His companions —who had walked up to Jerusalem with Him from Galilee—saw Him alive and are witnesses to the People that this is true.

"So now we have come here to tell you the glad news, that the promise God made to our fathers He has carried out for us—their children."

Some of the Jews—probably the officials of the synagogue sitting just in front of where Paul was speaking—evidently wagged their heads and glowered at him, murmuring to one another that nobody who hung on the accursed death-tree could be a Son of God. For turning swiftly to them at the end of his speech, Paul said:

"Take care, then, for fear that the old saying may be true of you—

"'Look, you contemptuous folk, wonder at this and perish.
For in your days I do a deed,
A deed you will never believe,
Not though one were to explain it to you.'"

There was a bustle of excitement when Paul had finished. The people were all agog—some thinking what Paul said might really be true; others practically convinced that he and Barnabas were nothing but a pair of travelling impostors. As the two went out of the door a number of people who thought the story of Jesus was true came clustering round them, asking a great many questions. Some of these people were Jews. Others were Greeks and Romans, on whose pagan life

"... disgust
And secret loathing fell;
Deep weariness and sated lust
Made human life a hell."

These Greeks and Romans had heard the Jews

talking of the one holy unseen eternal God—the Spirit Who created all things; and they felt that they could worship Him, as they never could really bow down to their ill-tempered, evil-living gods. So they had attached themselves to the worship of the Jews and had accepted circumcision.

"Repeat it all next Sabbath," said the people; and Paul promised that he would do so.

As the elder boys went home from the synagogue, and sat down to food at home, they would hear their fathers discussing this astonishing new teaching. On the next day—in the market-place, among the groups chattering in the bazaar—the one centre of conversation was the words of these strange new visitors. So that on the following Sabbath when Paul and Barnabas went to synagogue, they found themselves faced by a sea of men—Jews, Greeks, and Romans—and at the doorway a mass of the people who did not belong to their worship, but had come together out of curiosity to hear this new strange story.

Meanwhile the Jews, who had shown on the previous Sabbath that they did not believe what Paul said, were getting angry with these vagrant preachers who had set all the people by the ears. They were jealous, too, that so many people had come together to hear Paul. When he began to speak they interrupted, contradicting him and calling him names there in the synagogue. But the more they attacked him, the more fearlessly did Paul and Barnabas argue and maintain with all their power that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, the Christ of God.

At last, the two comrades saw that the narrower

Jews were hopelessly bigoted against them. So they stood up and said:

"The Word of God had to be spoken to you Jews in the first instance. But as you push it aside and judge that you yourselves are not worthy of eternal life, well (and they pointed to the crowd of faces at the back and in the doorway), here, we turn to the Nations."

The outside people were delighted to hear this. When the synagogue service broke up they crowded round to hear more. And in the market-place, when the people came in from the country round, they were told of the wonderful news that the Creator of all the world had come into human life and shown His love in Jesus the Christ. When they went back home to their country villages among the hills they talked about the new doctrine. The next market-day they would ask more about it, and maybe gather round Paul and Barnabas to hear what they had to say. Many of them learned to believe, and in many places round about little bands of Christian people began to grow into being.

All the while, however, the angry Jews were working secretly. They went to the women who worshipped in their synagogue who were married to Roman officials of high rank; and they got them to urge their husbands to turn these "tramp fellows" out of the city, where they were upsetting everybody.

So one day they began to hustle Paul and Barnabas out of the city. Down the street and out through the gate they rushed the two. When they were out in the open, Paul and Barnabas stopped and undid their san-

dals, took them off, and shook out the dust. It was their declaration of protest (as every Jew who watched them doing it knew quite well) against the treatment of the Antiochenes.

They were out on the open road again with the white stones of the Roman road under their feet, and the blue sky overhead. John Mark (they remembered) had gone back in safety to his quiet home in Palestine. Saul and Barnabas, despised and rejected, amid contumely and derision, went hooted and homeless out on to the road of adventure for the King.

XIV

WORSHIPPED AND STONED

A SPLENDID road was under their feet as they left Antioch. It was an Imperial road—one more in the many links of the chain that bound the nations around the Great Sea to the throne of the Mistress of the World.

Slaves and convicts, nearly half a century before Paul and Barnabas passed, had dug out the earth through the whole length of this road; they had quarried, carted, smashed, thrown in, and hammered down three layers of stone. Then, with ring of chisel and thud of mallet, they had paved the surface with closely fitting stone, the whole road being curved to throw off water into side trenches.

This road on which Paul and Barnabas strode south-eastwards gleamed there in the spring sunshine. The robbers in the hills saw the road and trembled. Down that road the Roman legionaries swiftly marched—sword at hip and shield on arm. The brazen Eagle on the Roman standard soared from the road up among the fastnesses of the robbers in the almost trackless mountain-range on their left, defying even the crags where the vultures swooped for their prey.

The road was the mark of Rome. It was the line along which she hurled the legions that kept over all the world at that day, from Britain to the Euphrates,

spring rains in among the orchards, the road brought them at length into Iconium.

Though the two comrades had travelled some ninety miles from Antioch in Pisidia, they were still in the great region over which Antioch ruled. As they walked through the streets of Iconium, they noticed that there were not so many Roman officials and soldiers as in Antioch. Both Antioch and Iconium were Roman cities, where Greek was spoken except by the poorer and the country people; but Antioch was a great governing city, while Iconium was a place of commerce where many traders came and went from all over the east and west to do business.

Out among the hills, where the men dug in the copper and the quicksilver mines, was the temple of the Earth-Mother, whom all the people in the plain worshipped. She dwelt in the earth (they thought) and sent them the precious metals, the river that sprang from the hills, and the harvest out of the ground. The Greeks taught the people of Iconium to worship her as Athene, the conquering goddess; but they still worshipped her really as the Earth-Mother with her companion Snake, who came out of the earth to do her bidding.

Paul and Barnabas went into the synagogue on the Sabbath, just as they had done at Antioch, to speak about Jesus.

So powerfully did they both speak that a great number of people—both the Jews and the Greeks—believed that what they said was true. But some of the Jews utterly refused to accept the story.

"These travelling fellows," we can almost hear

them saying, "are just lying for their own ends, with their wild legend about this Christ, Who died on a Roman cross, like those wretched robbers nailed up at the cross-roads over the plain there. The blasphemy of saying such a one could rise again!"

There was a great deal of communication between Antioch and Iconium, so it would be very likely that some trader or official who had come to Iconium from Antioch would say:

"What! Are these wretches here? Why, we chased them out of Antioch for a disturbing couple of meddlers. Why don't you do the same?"

Those Jews who loathed Paul and Barnabas and all their words and works, exasperated the people in the market-place and all over the city against the two comrades. The whole place began to be in a fever of excitement; some crying, "Stone them!" though not quite sure for what reason except that they were two "outsiders." But others said, "Why, what harm have they done?"

But the fever of hate grew hotter; the people began to come on with menaces and mutterings against them. So Paul and Barnabas quickly escaped and started out across the plain. All day they walked, the road gradually rising till they found themselves on a long ridge of rock looking down on a broad valley through which a beautiful stream ran. On the horizon south-eastward they saw the line of the Taurus mountains.

Dropping down the road from the ridge to the valley they saw a compact city built around and on a little hill. The stream ran past two sides of the city,

which was called Lystra. They were back again now on the road from which—you remember—they had branched off to go to Iconium. And Lystra was—like Antioch—a Roman Colony, a centre of government from which the orders of Rome were issued and her authority exercised. It was, however, smaller, more remote and newer than Antioch.

In front of the main gate of the city, near which the river flowed, was a fine temple to Zeus—the chief of the gods—where bulls were sacrificed by white-robed priests. There was a prophetic legend in Lystra that some day Zeus himself, with his messenger Hermes, would come and visit the city.

Paul and Barnabas went in through the gate into the streets of the city, where they stayed for some time.

One day Paul was speaking out in the open air. Crowds of people had gathered to listen to him. There happened to be sitting there a man powerless in his feet, a lame man who had been unable to walk since he was born.

This man heard Paul speaking, and was listening to him with rapt attention. Paul looked at the lame man and could see, from the utter confidence in his eyes, that the man had faith enough to make him better. Paul, therefore, stopped his speech, turned to the man, looked at him with that eager, compelling gaze of his and said, in a loud voice:

"Stand erect on your feet."

He jumped up and began to walk.

The crowd of Lystrans could not for the moment believe their eyes. This was no wandering beggar

who had pretended to be lame. He was one of their own people whom they knew to be a cripple. They began to shout out in strange language that Paul did not understand—the speech of their country, the Lycaonian language:

"The gods have come down to us as men."

Zeus was the greatest of the gods, and the Eastern people think of the silent, immovable man as the potentate; Hermes was his spokesman, his swift-flying, ready-tongued messenger.[1] So they named the quiet, gracious Barnabas, Zeus; and Paul, the orator, they called Hermes.

Paul and Barnabas saw a great stir going on, and put it down simply to the natural effect of the wonder of healing the cripple. But soon they heard the lowing of oxen; and saw them all garlanded being led along toward the great Temple of Zeus in front of the gate. The truth flashed on them. The people thought they were gods—mistook them for the very gods whose worship Paul's preaching would sweep away.

When the Eastern wishes to show his utter grief he will tear his robe. At the sight of the priests and the oxen, Paul and Barnabas seized their robes and rent them from neck to hem, and sprang out among the people, shouting out at the top of their voices:

"Men, what is this you are doing? We are men, with natures like your own.

"The Good News we have come to tell you is that you should turn from such futile ways to the living

[1] Zeus and Hermes are the Greek equivalents for Jupiter and Mercury.

God, Who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all that is in them.

"In bygone days He allowed all the nations to go their own ways, though, as the bountiful Giver, He did not leave Himself without witnesses. For he gave you rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, giving you food and joy to your hearts' content."

Try as they would with words and gestures they could hardly stop the people from sacrificing the oxen to them. At last the oxen were turned back, the garlands taken off, the priests put aside their sacrificial robes; and all was quiet once more.

Some time after this more travelling Jews came into the city of Lystra; a number from Antioch along the main road, others from Iconium.

No sooner did they find that Paul and Barnabas were at Lystra than they began to work up an agitation against them.

With crafty speech they went in and out among the simpler people working on their unthinking passions, their dislike of strange teaching and new people. A man who knows how to work on the mind of a mob can always work up an Oriental crowd into a frenzy to stone a stranger. "Stone Paul!" was the cry that went from lip to lip.

So as he went into the street in Lystra, threading his way among the people, the flame of hate caught fire.

"Stone him!" shouted someone, and in a moment the air was thick with missiles. The recollection of his healing of a cripple was wiped out in the hail of hate. They beat him to the ground, and then, stunned by a well-aimed stone, he lay senseless on the earth.

"Out of the city with the body!" was the next cry.

Gripping him under the arms they dragged Paul along and out under the city gateway, past the very temple where they had prepared, only a short while before, to worship him and Barnabas, and flung him out in the sun.

XV

THE RETURN JOURNEY

THE disciples in Lystra, as soon as they heard the uproar, ran out, and were now gathered anxiously round the body of their leader.

Was Paul dead? As they asked one another the question, dreading the expected answer, they saw, to their joy, the eyes of their loved chief open. Slowly he stood up, his body bruised in every limb; but alive and undaunted. With his supporters round him he walked right back into the city whence he had just been thrown as dead. Awed, perhaps, by the rising of this man whom they thought to be killed, and held in unwilling admiration for courage that never faltered or quailed, not a man stooped to lift a stone against him.

Paul walked back to the house in which he and Barnabas were staying in Lystra. Putting their light travelling kit together—the staff and cloak, the water-jar and wallet of bread and olives—they laid down and slept in preparation for the journey of to-morrow. At dawn, the two went out from Lystra across the plain eastward along the road. Probably they would hire an ass on which Paul could ride, so that his bruised and buffeted body should be able to stand the strain of travel. All day long they marched, talking of the hate in the hearts of the Jews—on ac-

count of the Good News, the hate that had driven them with stones from Antioch-in-Pisidia, from Iconium and now from Lystra.

Paul's memory could not but run back to the stoning of Stephen to which he himself had consented. He recalled, again and again, how he had harried the Christians in Jerusalem. There came back to him those

> "... remembered faces,
> Dear men and women, whom I sought and slew!
> Ah, when we mingle in the heavenly places,
> How will I weep to Stephen and to you!
>
> O! for the strain that rang to our reviling
> Still when the bruised limbs sank upon the sod,
> O! for the eyes that looked their last in smiling,
> Last on this world here, but there first on God."
> . . . . . .

Out over the brown, rolling hills, where the harvests had now been reaped, the two comrades went sturdily. Overhead the storks were now beginning to trail back to Jordan and the South before the winter snows came.

At length Paul and Barnabas came up a long slope, from which the road ran down into a broad plain. From the ridge of the hill where they stood they could see down over the vast plateau, across which the Taurus mountains were now beginning to cast the shadows of late afternoon. Out of the plain there rose the abrupt mass of a black mountain. And there, on a slight hill in the midst of the plateau, they saw the walls of a city. It was Derbe.

Paul and Barnabas, trudging and riding down the last league of the Roman road, saw that Derbe was a

smaller city than Iconium or Lystra or Antioch-in-Pisidia. But its walls were just as thick as those of the greater cities. For Derbe was the eastern frontier-town of the province of Galatia. Up in the mountains some of the most daring robbers in the world hid in their fortresses, from which they rushed down in bands on the rich travellers who rode up to Derbe from the east.

Quietly the two men settled down in this border-city of Derbe for the winter. The few late travellers who came over the mountain-pass from the south-east would tell of new-fallen snow; and soon the flow of camel caravans ceased altogether. The pass was blocked with snow, and the great black guardian mountain of the plain was all white.

Paul would soon find work to do, making and mending tents for the shepherds and travellers, so that he could live without cost to anyone else. He could talk as he worked, and the people would squat round him in his booth, asking questions and discussing the strange news that he brought to them, that God had spoken to men in a Son—Jesus Christ. A number of the people of Derbe were convinced that what these two travelling teachers said was true; and they gave themselves into the hands of Jesus Christ and became His disciples.

The winter wore on to spring-time. Avalanches of snow thundered down from the solitary mountain to the plain, leaving its stark black mass jutting into the bright sky. But the narrow pass through the Taurus range was still stopped by the deep snow.

All the life of the plateau began to move again in

the spring, and Paul and Barnabas joined the stream of caravans that began to travel up and down the road. They turned their faces to the west, and tramped up by the road along which they had come in the autumn. They came again in sight of the Temple at Lystra, and went fearlessly into the city where—only a few months earlier—Paul was stoned. There they spoke to the disciples, and told them that they must grip the Faith firmly and live in daily conversation with their Unseen Saviour.

"It will not be easy," said Paul, "for we have to get into the Kingdom of God through many a trouble."

They would listen respectfully to Paul as he said this, for they knew, by the evidence of their own eyes, that even stoning would not move him from the Faith, and that his courage and loyalty were not shaken by all the threats of his persecutors.

Then he would go on in words like those which he repeated to these very people later on in a letter:

"People who quarrel and are jealous or ill-tempered, or impure, never come into the Kingdom of God.

"Let us have no vanity, no provoking.

"Those who belong to Christ have put their flesh —with its hot passion—on the Cross.

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control."

Then Paul and Barnabas chose out some of the strongest of the disciples in Lystra and appointed

them to be the leaders of the little church. Saying "Farewell" to the disciples at Lystra, they walked back over the eighteen miles to Iconium. As they came near, in the afternoon, the twin peaks, with their caps of snow, shone as the sun went down.

From Iconium they trudged over the ridge to the great Roman road and westward once more to Antioch-in-Pisidia. At each place they cheered the Christian people, telling them to stand firm, to expect rough times, and to face them for the sake of the new Kingdom. And over each church, leaders were placed to guide them. We do not hear of Paul going to synagogues at all on this return journey, but only to the bands of Christian folk, so that he could strengthen them.

The full spring had now come. The mountain-passes were open. It was time to leave the plateau; to go back to the Christians of Antioch in Syria, who had sent them out two years ago, and to tell these friends how they had sped in their journeys.

Among the rolling hills of Pisidia the snow left the bare rocks dully glowing in reds and browns that looked as though hidden fires burned in the mountain. Here and there the first red anemones thrust their heads out, like tiny tongues of flame.

The shrill call of a boy to his plaintive, bleating kids and lambs, as they leaped the bare hillside in search of new grass, came to their ears; the ploughman goading his lumbering oxen while they slowly crossed the field; the vine-dresser digging about the roots of his trees, came to their eyes.

They climbed to the crest of the range and then

plunged down southward through the grey pine-covered ravines, up which they had come early in the preceding summer. During all that time they had breathed the sharp air of the plateau cities—standing between three and four thousand feet above sea-level. Now they were quickly dropping down to the hot, close, damp plains between the mountains and the sea, where the snow rarely came.

The spring rains and the melting snows of the mountains turned the burns into torrents, which ran in full spate down the ravine. Far, far below they came to the place where the stream was spanned by a bridge that carried Paul and Barnabas across to the great city of Perga, where he had been smitten with fever on his way up.

They preached to the people in Perga, and then, instead of taking ship from the river-harbour, they started over the Pamphylian plain round the curve of the bay to the sea-harbour of Attalia. As they travelled they would pass droves of donkeys and caravans of camels, carrying the wool of the mountain sheep and goats, the oil of the olives and the dried fruit from the orchards down to be shipped to the great cities like Rome and Alexandria and Antioch.

By the quay they found a ship bound for Seleucia. Taking a passage, they soon found themselves again on the Great Sea. The ship, once loosed from her cables and rowed out between the mighty stone piers of the harbour, turned eastward along the coast.

Above him, on the left, Paul could see the snow-covered ridge of the Taurus mountains, from which he and Barnabas had just descended. As he thought

of that splendid Roman road up there on the plateau with its cities, and remembered those Christian people whom he had left there vowed to the Way, he saw, as through an arch, a still untravelled world of wonderful possibility. The road ran west as well as east—and west lay Ephesus, Athens, Corinth, Rome. Paul dared to dream of a campaign that would capture those great cities—and the mighty empire to which they belonged.

The ship at last sighted Seleucia. Furling her brown sails and skilfully guided by the steersman through the narrow passage between the piers, she hove to in the inner harbour. Paul and Barnabas landed and hastened up the riverside to Antioch.

We can well imagine the excitement and joy of the Brethren there at seeing their missionaries once more. They gathered together and listened to the story of their adventures. Their faces lightened with joy as they heard how Sergius Paulus, a Roman proconsul, had been convinced that Christ was the very Son of God. But their faces darkened when they heard how Paul had been stoned almost to death, and how the Jews in Antioch and Iconium and Lystra had persecuted them both.

When all the story was told, however, they felt, above all, a strange gladness, because Jesus Christ—they were now quite sure—was the Door through whom any man, Jew or Greek, Roman or Egyptian, slave or master, could come by faith into the very presence of God.

XVI

THE DECISIVE BATTLE

TITUS the Greek, and Paul the Tarsian were at supper in Antioch, with a sturdy, bronzed and bearded man, who spoke with a Galilean burr. Their guest was Peter, who had come up from Jerusalem to visit the Brethren at Antioch.

He found among the Christian folk at Antioch many Greeks. The Church in Jerusalem, where Peter lived, was made up entirely of Jews. But Peter (we remember) had had his great vision on the roof-top at Joppa, when God had showed him that he was not to call men of any nation unclean. He therefore went in and took food at the same table with these Christian Greeks at Antioch.

So Peter and Titus, Paul and Lucius, Manaen and the others broke their bread and ate their cheese and olives together at Antioch, as they talked over the great plans that they had.

Unknown to themselves, however, a cloud was coming upon them from beyond the south of Mount Sulpius. Men were walking over the hills from Jerusalem to Antioch.

They were Christians whom Peter knew. But they thought that Jesus had come simply to the Jews alone, as their own Messiah. The disciples of Jesus (they felt) formed just another party among the

Jews. There were the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and now the Nazarenes.

"We shall be swamped by foreigners!" was the cry they raised when they heard Paul's story of how a Roman ruler in Cyprus and the Greeks in Galatia had entered into the Way of Christ without obeying the Law of Moses.

"Keep out the alien—the Gentile," said these Christians who had come of Paul's old sect—the Pharisees. "Jesus was a Jew, and was circumcised (they argued); He preached to Jews, His disciples were all under the Law of Moses. Jesus came from God to the Chosen People, the Jews—and to them alone."

Then they flung down their challenge to Paul and to the Greeks in the Church at Antioch.

"Unless you are circumcised and so become Jews," they said, "after the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."

It came like the blow of an axe, cleaving the Church in two.

Peter, who—now, as in the old days—was easily carried away, began to hold aloof from the Greek Christians. Even Barnabas showed signs of giving way, and of joining the narrow party. The Jews in the Church were against Paul; while the Greeks, on the other side, were in alarm, because their whole position as Christians was denied.

Paul's blood was up. He turned on Peter before all the others and denounced him.

"You stand self-condemned," he said. "You, Peter, have been living like a foreigner, though you are a Jew. How, then, dare you insist that the

foreigners should become Jews when they worship in the name of Christ? If a man must have a mark cut on his body before he can be saved—why, what was the use of Jesus Christ living and dying to bring us near to God? I tell you, circumcision and uncircumcision are just nothing. What matters is the new man whom Christ makes."

With the Brethren divided into two parties of Jews and Greeks, it was quite clear that this question must be settled once for all. And it must be settled at Jerusalem or it would all break out again, for Jerusalem was the centre of the Jew party.

Paul and Barnabas, with some of the others, were sent off by the Christians of Antioch to Jerusalem.

As this little group of men with their cloaks and water-bottles and walking-staffs set out along the road, few people, except the Greek Christians who went out to cheer them, would know or care on what enterprise they were going. But, to those with eyes to see, this was, indeed, one of the great moments in history. Paul was starting out—as surely as any knight has ever done—to fight one of the great decisive battles of the world, almost alone.

For he was the only man among them all who had really cut a clear, straight way through the tangled forest of thought on this question. His banner had one phrase upon it, "Freedom in Christ." He alone never wavered by a hair's breadth from declaring that Jesus Christ came into the world not to save Jews alone, but all men, whatever their colour or race or country or nation, rich and poor, men and women;

and that, in Him, men were free from the ancient bondage of the Law of Moses.

If Paul had surrendered with Peter or wavered with Barnabas, unless some other courageous large-minded man like him had been raised up, Christianity would have ceased to be missionary; which means that it must have ceased to be. Britain, and indeed Europe itself, would never have heard of Jesus Christ. His followers would have dwindled to a miserable little Jewish sect.

The Church at Antioch, now that they saw through the eyes of Paul all that this meant, were intensely eager to see the question fought out. So they went out down the road quite a long way, cheering Paul and Barnabas and the rest on their journey.

At last they said "farewell," and the deputation travelled down by the coast to the ancient cities of Phœnicia—Tyre and Sidon. It was probably winter-time. Up in the high mountain-passes—inland—the roads were blocked with deep snowdrifts, where the blizzard would blind the struggling traveller. But on the lower road, between the mountains and the sea, though it was wild and stormy, the snow soon melted. So they wrapped their cloaks about them and breasted storm and wind; and walked gladly and quickly when the sun shone in the sharp, clear, frosty morning. Sometimes the road ran down by a riverbed, and sometimes it was cut out of the face of the rock looking over the sea. There, on the Phœnician coast they saw, cut in the rock, strange figures and curious letters which no man among them could read; letters carved by an ancient race that had conquered the north

country ages before Paul came. This ancient people we call the Hittites.

At last they came over a high cliff in sight of the crowded harbour-city of Sidon. Here the people heard with great joy how Jesus Christ had been placarded before the eyes of the foreign peoples in the far-off cities over the sea; and how those people, without passing under the Jewish Law at all, had heard and accepted the Good News of the coming of Jesus. They then went on farther south, along the coast to the city of Tyre. Paul saw the fishers coming up from the beach with the shellfish, from which they made the purple dye which no one before or since has ever equalled for beauty. He passed by the evil-smelling vats, where the wool was dipped in this imperial purple for Roman senators and knights to wear.

Then they pushed inland and had little to say to the people in Judæa, where the news that the other nations were learning through Christ their nearness to God was not welcome to Jews. When the travellers came at length up the hill under the city gate and into Jerusalem, it must have seemed strange to Paul that he was going to fight—because they were too narrow as Christians—the very people whom he had, years ago, as a Pharisee, harried because they worshipped Christ at all.

The whole Church in Jerusalem—with the apostles and the elders—met together to discuss with Paul and Barnabas. They sat round, with James, our Lord's brother, presiding over them.

Paul stood up. He just painted for them the picture of how Sergius Paulus in Cyprus, the Greeks and

Romans in the great cities of the plateau, had, through their preaching about Christ, actually and truly received the Holy Spirit. There it was—a living flaming fact that God had, through Christ, given His Spirit to uncircumcised foreigners. They might argue that the whole Law of Moses was against it, but there stood the Fact which they could not gainsay. God was free to do what He would in His own world; and this was what He had done.

Up sprang some of the members of the Pharisee party in the Church. They may well have been some of Paul's own old fellow-students.

"We insist," they said, "that the foreign nations must be circumcised and must obey the Law of Moses before they can join the Christian Church."

To which Paul would reply, "If a man can be made good by just obeying the Law of Moses, then Jesus Christ lived and died for nothing."

The leaders in the church at Jerusalem met again (without the ordinary members being present), and began to wrangle violently about the matter. Their eyes burned as the discussion grew hot. There was danger of a quarrel that would split the whole Church. By this time Peter was his old self again, completely convinced that Paul was right, and that Jesus Christ came to bring all men together into the love of God. So he stood up and said:

"Brothers, you know very well that, from the earliest days, God chose that I should be the one through whom Nations should hear the Word of the Good News and should believe it.

"God, who reads the hearts of everyone, proved

it by giving these foreign people the Holy Spirit, exactly as He gave Him to us. In making their hearts clean by faith He did not make the slightest distinction between us and them.

"Why now should you try to put a yoke on the neck of these disciples which neither our fathers nor ourselves could bear?

"No, depend upon it, it is by the grace of the Lord Jesus that we believe and are saved, in the same way as they are."

All the wrangling stopped and everyone listened with breathless attention, as Paul and Barnabas stood up and told again the wonderful things that God had done among the Nations.

When they had finished, James stood to put what he felt to be the general agreement of the meeting.

"Brothers," he said, "listen to me. Simeon has explained to us how it was God's original intention to gather a People from among the foreign nations to bear His Name. And this agrees with the prophet, who said of David's fallen tent:

> "'I will build it afresh,
> That the rest of men may seek for the Lord,
> Even all the Nations that are called by My Name.'

"For that reason my opinion is that we ought not to put fresh difficulties in the way of the Nations. But we should write to them, telling them to obey the Law in four points: to abstain from any food that has been killed for idol worship, to live pure lives, not to eat animals that have been strangled (i.e. in whose veins the blood still remains), and not to taste blood."

This was agreed to, and some of the Jerusalem men were selected to go up to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. So they chose Judas Bar-Sabbas and Silas, who were well-known members of the Christian Brotherhood in Jerusalem.

A letter was written on a fine parchment and rolled up and thrust into the tunic of one of the travellers, probably Judas Bar-Sabbas. Thus prepared, they set out to tramp back northward over the long road, by hill and lake and river and plain, to Antioch.

There was great eagerness at Antioch to know what was the result, and all the Christian folk gathered together to hear it. The letter was brought out and unrolled and handed over to one of the Antiochenes, who read it out to them. The letter said:

"From the apostles and elders of the Brotherhood, to the brothers who belong to the Nations throughout Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greeting.

"We hear that some of our number, quite without our authority, have upset you with their teaching; so we have made up our minds to choose some of our men and to send them along with our loved comrades, Paul and Barnabas, who have risked their lives for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"We therefore send Judas and Silas with the following message, which they will also give to you by word of mouth.

"The Holy Spirit and we have decided not to place any extra burden on you, apart from these four things."

Then followed the four things named in James's speech.

The letter ended thus:

"Keep clear of all this and you will prosper. Good-bye."

After all, it was not a very clear letter, because it tried to reconcile two points of view that never could agree. It tried to make some minor parts of the Law binding, while allowing general freedom. But the great point was gained. The Greeks were to be free from the necessity to come under the law of circumcision. The Greek Christians at Antioch made great rejoicing, their love for and admiration of Paul, their great leader, grew deeper and stronger.

The first battle in his long campaign for freedom was won against great odds at the very centre of the enemies' strength—in Jerusalem.

XVII

FINDING A SON

SOME days later, as Paul was talking to Barnabas, he said:

"Come, Barnabas, let us go back and visit the brothers in every town where we have proclaimed the Word. Let us see how they are doing."

Barnabas said, "Yes, I agree. Who shall we take with us? I suggest my nephew, young John Mark."

Paul frowned at this. "I do not want," he said, "to have as our helper the man who turned back and shirked the dangers of carrying the message when we were in Pamphylia."

It would not be easy for Paul to avoid hurting Barnabas' feelings in telling him that his nephew, John Mark, had not the spirit of courage and the sturdiness needed in men who must be ready to risk their lives at any hour and take a stoning or a beating without flinching. Indeed, it is likely that Paul's quick temper would lead him to say this abruptly. Barnabas maybe thought that John Mark ought to have a second chance; but Paul would not take the risk. We can see that he was right in thinking that they must not have a man with them who would fail at a pinch.

In any case, what Paul said made Barnabas so angry that he would have nothing more to do with his old friend. Barnabas took his kinsman, young John

Mark, and went off on a missionary journey to his native place, Cyprus, leaving Paul in Antioch.

It cut Paul to the quick to part from the great comrade of his first journey. He and Barnabas had faced stoning, fever and robbers together; and had shared the perils of river and road and sea. But Paul knew that he was on a great enterprise, where any man was unfit who (like John Mark) quailed before death or feared to take any adventure that might come to him.

Paul never thought of himself as a hero; he only knew that he cared so much for the carrying out of God's great aim that he forgot his own safety. So Paul could claim rightly:

"I prove myself at all points a true servant to God,
By great endurance, by suffering,
By troubles, by calamities,
By lashes, by imprisonment;
Mobbed, toiling, sleepless, starving." [1]

So even for the love of Barnabas, his comrade, he could not take with him a man like John Mark, whom he believed to be unready to face all these things.

Barnabas, therefore, all sore and angry in spirit, went down with John Mark to the port at Seleucia to set sail westward. We do not hear that Paul and Barnabas ever met again.

Paul went to ask the friend with whom he had had many talks on their way up from the Council at Jerusalem—Silas—whether he would go out on the long, perilous journey over the mountains to the people

[1] 2 Cor. vi. 4-5.

of the plateau. He—like Paul—though a Jew, was a Roman citizen. His full Roman name was Silvanus, but his friends called him Silas for short.

Paul wanted Silas to go with him, across the Taurus mountains, to the Roman cities of Derbe and Lystra, Iconium and Antioch. Silas would be a great help to Paul there—not only because he was a Roman Jew, but because he had been at the Jerusalem Council where they had decided on the message to the Nations. The strict Christian Jews in these Roman cities of the province of Galatia might say that Paul was a crank without any authority to tell the Nations they might come into the Fellowship without circumcision; but they would find it difficult to say such things to Silas, who came from the Church at Jerusalem itself carrying a letter signed by James.

Paul and his new friend, Silas, started out northward. A little band of the Brethren came to give them a send-off. The flush of sunrise was reflected in the Orontes on their right as they crossed the bridge which carried them out on to the northern plain.

They had a long camping journey of many weeks ahead of them, in which they must be ready to wade across streams, skirt lakes, climb great mountain passes, and trudge over wide plains. They would probably take asses with them, who would carry, in saddle-bags slung across their backs, water-bottles, their oil and cheese and olives for the midday meal, an iron crock for cooking their dish of corn and meat at night, their hooded cloaks for shelter from the rain or mountain snow, and for sleeping in at night.

Sometimes they joined a company of traders, who

travelled along the road together for defence against the robbers. They would take special care to do this when they began to climb from the great plain, round the curving roads among the brown hills, and up into the brigand-infested ravines of the mountains that divided Syria (the province in which Damascus and Antioch lay) from Cilicia (the province of Paul's own boyhood, where Tarsus stood).[1]

Paul and Silas talked as they rode along or walked by the side of the asses. Paul was very proud of his native city, toward which they were travelling. He would be sure to tell Silas stories of his life when he was a boy in Tarsus there. He could, as they came to rest in the evening at one of the caravan centres, point to black low tents stretched around them on the camping-ground, made of the famous Tarsian goat's-hair cloth. The cloth was known all over the Roman Empire as *cilicium,* because it came from this Cilician plain on which Paul was born.

Silas knew that Paul had been trained as "a tent-maker." Paul could tell him, "I intend to earn my living at my trade whenever I stay in a city to preach. In that way I shall stop men from saying that I follow Christ just to get a livelihood."

We can be certain that Silas and he would discuss the quarrel with Barnabas, and they would wish that there were some younger man like John Mark, only braver, with them as a helper.

"There is a young fellow in Lystra over the mountains," Paul might say, "named Timothy" (i.e. Fear-God). "He became a disciple of Jesus Christ when I

[1] See map at end.

was there. His father is a Greek and his mother a Jewess. I believe he would make a fine helper in place of John Mark."

Talking in this way they came down among the towns in the Cilician plain where Paul preached and taught in these quiet years before Barnabas came to fetch him to Antioch. As Paul came through the streets of these towns in Cilicia, the faces of the Christian people, cobbling and baking in their little shops, lighted up with gladness when they saw their old friend come back.

They would run and bring together the other Brethren who lived in the town, and they would listen eagerly to Paul who had, years before, by his teaching brought them into the new and splendid Fellowship. We are not told what he said to them, but without doubt he would say simple, straight words like these which he wrote to his friends:

"My brothers, whom I love and have longed to see, stand fast.

"I wish greatly that your love may grow more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; so that you may be keen on the things that are really good."

Then those two splendid sentences that might be the command of a commander to his armies:

"Stand fast together in one spirit, with one mind, working hard together for the Faith of the Good News."

"Do not be at all terrified by your enemies. You

are to have the gift of going through hard times on behalf of Christ, fighting battles like those through which I have gone."

"Do all your work," he went on, "without muttering and disputing with one another; so that you may not be open to blame and may do harm to no one. Live like sons of God among a crooked-minded and contrary Nation, shining in the midst of them like lights in the world, holding out as a torch the Word of Life."

In many of these places the same hard question came up—the Jews declaring that everybody must come under the Law and the others saying "No." It was a great help to them when Silas brought out his parchment and read aloud the letter that said they were not to have this burden laid upon them.

At last they came out on the bank of the River Cydnus and reached the great city of Tarsus. Paul's father and mother must have been very old by this time; if, indeed, they had not died. Some of his old schoolmates would not speak to him—they had grown to be strict Pharisees who would have nothing to do with Paul since he had become a Christian. But others, who had been led by him into the blithe joy of being worshippers of God through Christ, would have plucked their very eyes out to give to him, if he had needed them.

But he and Silas could not rest long even here. In front of them rose the high ridge of the Taurus.

And on the other side of the snows of the mountains was the great plateau of the Roman cities.

The asses were brought out and a supply of food placed in the saddle-bags. For they must prepare for days of trudging up lonely defiles where no villages stood, nor any place of rest, save the solitary roadside inn by the rushing stream, with its dark low stable and rough bare room.

They rode out of the city by the northern gate. The hoofs of the asses clattered on the paved Roman road that ran straight ahead of them. They could see its distant lengths shining in the sunlight up past the Hill of the Seven Sleepers. They went through the suburb among the hills, where Paul and his father and mother and sister used to come in the summer months when all the plain lay baked under the fierce, sultry heat of the sun.

At length the last house of the distant Tarsus suburb lay behind Paul and Silas. Before them the road curved like a serpent among the hills by the side of the stream. It was still the great paved Roman road, for this was the Way along which the legions marched and the Imperial Post galloped.

Among the hills by the roadside the spring anemones bloomed, but as they climbed higher, along the side of the rushing torrent of icy snow-water, no flowers bloomed. Further on they stopped to take their olives and cheese and bread, where the grey old sycamores clung with their gnarled roots to the rocks that were greyer and older than the trees; while up above on the steep craggy peaks, the dark green pine trees moaned in the wind.

The sound of the tinkle and boom of bells came on them. Round the curve of the rocky road a camel came.[1] On his neck were little copper bells that gave a tinkling sound, and from his side hung larger ones that sounded deeper tones as the camel strode silently down the pass. Behind him another camel came, and another and another—eight all linked together by light chains, and the first and the last wore bells; so that the camelman who rode in front on a little donkey knew —if the bells in the distance ceased to sound—that the chain had broken and some of his camels were left behind.

The sun went behind the rocks. As the late afternoon wore on Paul and Silas came to a square low building; just four windowless stone walls without; and within a quadrangle in which they could stable the asses and find a corner by the wood-fire where they could wrap themselves in their cloaks and sleep.

Outside the inn they saw the camels in groups, all in circles with tails outward and heads down in the centre, eating the corn that their driver had thrown down. A new string of camels came in, and slowly squatting down, grunted discontentedly while their driver unlashed the burdens from their backs.

As night fell, Paul and Silas, having gathered together twigs and pieces of wood, lighted a fire under their crock and boiled a dish of wheat and oil and spices. Other fires crackled all round the encampment.

[1] Going through this pass in February, 1914, I met in one day over 400 camels coming down on to the Taurus plain carrying goods. The photograph facing this page was taken during that day.

The flames threw wild leaping shadows of the sleeping camels against the wall of the inn. Then a camel-driver started to sing a long ballad-story in many short verses; many of the verses were so foul and unclean that Paul and Silas were glad to wrap their cloaks around their ears and lie down to sleep.

Before the morning sun had even caught the snow-crest of the Taurus in its loop of flame, Paul and Silas were up and, having washed in the running water of the stream, were away on the road again. As they climbed higher up the profound gorge, which was filled from depth to height with the sound of running waters and the tinkle of camel bells, the dizzy, grey crags soared higher and higher on either side. Then they came to a place where it seemed as though they must turn back; for, right across the road, towering six hundred feet above them, lay the crowning ridge of the mountain range. They could neither climb nor go round. Yet the road lay straight on, as though into the very heart of the Taurus rocks.

Paul and Silas trudged on; and the narrowest pass in the world opened before them. There ran the road, so strait that a laden camel brushed the grey rocks with his burden, and by the road the swift mountain torrent ran. From the road and the river the two precipices soared up and up, as though defying the very skies—hundreds upon hundreds of feet of grey, defiant, glorious rock echoing with the music of the stream.

They went on into the shadow of this deep ravine —the Cilician Gates. We do not know whether they remembered that Alexander the Great with all his

armies had poured through that narrow defile. Certainly Paul would have laughed if Silas had said to him, what was perfectly true; that in that ravine at that moment, in the cloak of a travelling Jew, with hands stained and rough with the toil of tent-making, with limbs toughened and with muscle taut with the travail of much journeying, stood a man greater than Alexander himself. For Paul was mightier in his real power, swifter and more daring in brain than even Alexander, as brave and reckless of danger in action, and destined to have an effect on the future history of the world far wider and deeper. For Paul took up the standard of an empire that was to cover more races than even Alexander ever saw, and he dared to fight his life's campaign not at the head of an army, but, almost alone, in the power of an invisible and risen King.

"Yes, without cheer of sister or of daughter,
Yes, without stay of father or of son,
Lone on the land and homeless on the water,
Pass I in patience till the work be done.

Yet not in solitude if Christ anear me
Waketh him workers for the great employ,
Oh, not in solitude if souls that hear me
Catch from my joyaunce the surprise of joy."[1]

So Paul and Silas passed through the straight and narrow Gate out into the sunshine of the high plateau. They rode among the hills in a broad valley with no ravine, and then dropped to the plain which ran for hundreds of miles at a level of some three or four thousand feet above the level of the sea. They were

[1] F. W. H. Myers, *St. Paul.*

now in the kingdom of Antiochus—who held rule in allegiance to Rome. They did not stop at any cities in this kingdom, but pressed on with all speed to the frontier-city of the Lycaonian part of the Province of Galatia—Derbe.

Paul came into Derbe—as you will see from the map—at the east gate in place of the west which he had entered (coming from Lystra) on his earlier journey with Barnabas. To the Christians there he and Silas read and explained the letter from Jerusalem and spoke to the people encouraging them.

From Derbe they hastened on westward along the Roman road. It may well be that Paul would tell Silas how he had come from Lystra along that road all bruised with the cruel stones of the mob, who had been egged on by the angry Jews. At length they came in sight of Lystra with the sun setting behind the great Temple of Jupiter, whose priests (we remember) had started to sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas as Mercury and Jupiter.

"Here is Timothy," said Paul to Silas, as a young fellow hurried to greet them, his eyes all shining with joy at seeing his great hero Paul back again in Lystra.

Silas would see from Timothy's hair and from the colour of his eyes and his skin that he was not a pure-blooded Jew. When they went to Timothy's he found that Timothy's father was a Greek, and his mother, named Eunice, was a Jewess. In the house with them lived his grandmother, named Lois.

If Timothy was excited when he saw Paul come back into Lystra, he would hardly hold himself

for joy and surprise when Paul put to him the question:

"Will you come with me on my journey carrying the Good News of the Love of God as shown in Jesus Christ?"

We can imagine how Timothy would cry:

"Oh, yes, of all the things in the world that I most desire . . ." when Paul would quietly interrupt him and tell him how John Mark had turned back in fear.

"This is no easy thing," he would tell Timothy. "We must be ready to face weariness and pain, hunger and thirst and cold, storm and brigands, stoning and beatings, imprisonment and the fear of death."

But as he looked into the face of Timothy and saw all his brave spirit looking at him with love and worship, eager to dare any danger if he might only be with his master Paul, he could not hesitate, but gave the word that Timothy was to travel with them on the new adventure into lands that none of them had ever seen.

XVIII

WESTWARD HO!

AS he saw Eunice putting the last stitches to her Timothy's cloak and filling his wallet with bread and dates, cheese and salted olives, Paul could not but remember how his own mother had, years ago, made ready for him to go down to Jerusalem to college. Only he would understand much better now than he did as a boy the wrench that it is for a mother to let her son leave home to go far away.

The trembling hands of Grandmother Lois told their story, too, as she filled Timothy's water-bottle and slipped an extra cake quietly into his wallet, while Timothy strapped on his sandals and took up his iron-shod staff. There were no luxuries, for they were on a campaign and must "travel light."

At last all the preparations were made. Then, with his own cloak, and perhaps Paul's, over his shoulder, and with his wallet and bottle at his girdle, Timothy said "Goodbye" to his mother and grandmother, and stepped out into the great world. Going under the arch of the west gate of Lystra, the three travellers took a road which Timothy knew well—the road to the neighbouring city—Iconium.

Paul and his companions wonderfully represented the world of the northern and eastern lands of the Mediterranean. He and Silas were Jews and yet were

both Roman citizens. Timothy was the son of a Greek father, though his mother was a Jewess. Greek, Roman, and Jew, they were a band in which the three threads of the empire were woven together by great love for one another and in utter devotion to their one King.

Climbing over the ridge across which we have already travelled twice with Paul, they walked on all day. Before sunset, they were among the orchards of Iconium. In that city, again, as in Derbe and Lystra, they brought out the letter from Jerusalem. The Brethren there brought out parchment and a reed pen and carefully copied the letter, so that, if any strict Jews came and declared that the Greek Christians must obey all the Law of Moses, they could bring out the parchment to prove that it was not so.

From Iconium the three comrades struck across the shoulder of the Twin Peaks to the great Roman road. They trudged along the paved Way for, perhaps, two days, till they sighted the aqueduct coming over the valley from the hills to Antioch-in-Pisidia. Here, again, they cheered the Christian folk, and left with them a copy of the letter that was their Charter of Freedom.

Paul might now have turned, as he had done with Barnabas, to climb over the ridge of the mountains, drop down to Perga, and sail home to Antioch. But he had in his mind a daring scheme for a far wider campaign.

There, ahead of them, lay the road, calling them west to the great Greek cities of the Roman Empire.

On the road the camels trudged, bearing their burdens toward Ephesus and the sea. With the crack of a whip and the clatter of hoofs the Imperial Post rode to the west, taking the news of the empire back to Rome.

These words that Paul had heard as he knelt in the Temple at Jerusalem still rang in his ears.

"I have called you to carry the Good News to the Nations."

To carry his Good News to these great cities of the west, where men came and went from all parts of the empire, would, he knew, make it certain that the story would be carried all over the Mediterranean by those who went out—in ships or by road, or talked in the market and in the country-side village, in the city forum and cloisters of the gymnasium.

So Paul led his companions out to the west along the highroad of the Nations, that ran like a bridge from the east to the west.

The morning sun threw three purple shadows ahead of the travellers on the grey pavement of the road as they started out from Antioch-in-Pisidia on this new venture. Timothy strode lightly along, glad to feel the open road under his feet, and Paul, the great companion, by his side.

Paul was very silent as he walked, thinking over the future, hearing the Voice calling, calling him westward as surely as did the storks who were flying overhead. As they passed by towns on the road, Silas might ask:

"Shall we not stop to preach here?"

"No," Paul said, "the Spirit tells me that we must

go on and not stay to preach in all this Province of Asia."

Turning northward they walked for days, sometimes just by themselves, often in the company of a travelling band of traders. They were still on the high plateau, which in places became wild and rocky, and in others carried them for many hours over the flat plain.

Day after day they pressed on, starting before the dawn. Toward midday they stopped to eat their food under the sheltering shadow of a rock near the stone mouth of a solitary well. They rested here while all the country shimmered in the blaze of noon. As the sun dropped lower in the sky they moved on again. At night they slept the sound sleep of tired men in the shelter of a rough roadside inn, undisturbed by the wild cry of jackals among the hills, or the hungry howl of the wolves.

They would have gone on still further north into the Province of Bithynia, but guidance came again through the inner Voice of the Holy Spirit, who gave strong, sure leading to Paul. So they turned westward again, leaving the inviting streams that ran down their glens toward the Euxine,[1] and taking the road through the Mysia district of Asia.

They crossed river after river flowing northward, but never allowed the streams to lead them from keeping their faces toward the setting sun. Over bridge and through city and town, unhasting but unresting, talking of the work in front and the friends behind them at home, the three great companions strode along the Roman Way.

[1] The Black Sea.

Six hundred miles now separated Paul and Silas from the Brethren in Antioch in Syria, and Timothy had trudged from two to three hundred miles. There was no spare flesh on these three companions, trained as they were to the last ounce on simple food, tramping the great road in sun and wind and rain. Timothy with the Greek fondness for a body in perfect athletic trim would feel the taut, wiry muscles working under his skin with ill-concealed pride.

"Bodily exercise has some value in it," [1] said Paul to Timothy, "but the active life of the spirit is good in every way."

They were now dropping down from the highlands of the plateau by a long, broad valley. To their right the hills ran down to a lovely plain, but on their left the lovely mass of Mount Ida lifted above the valleys and looked out over the bluest sea in the world beyond the plains of Troy.

Paul might remember [2] the story that all true Greeks loved to hear in the immortal epic of Homer, of how the great armies of the Greeks and the Trojans on that very plain had been locked in frightful battle, led by the heroes; and how siege was laid for year after year, around the towers of Ilium for the sake of Helen. Paul would be just as likely to know, also, that on that plain young Alexander of Macedon, who later earned

[1] I Tim. iv, 8.

[2] A Jewish boy, the son of a Pharisee, would not usually know about Homer. But Paul at Athens quoted a Greek poet, showing that he knew some Greek poetry, and it may well be that in Tarsus he would meet some university student and hear the story of Homer or even borrow a roll of parchment on which the epic was written.

his title "the Great," had landed with his mighty armies and had there put on the armour of Achilles as though to clothe himself with the spirit of the ancient warrior-hero.

Yet on the day when Paul walked down on to those plains, Troy saw a greater leader than Achilles (one who never sulked in his tent!)—and, as we have already seen, a nobler leader than Alexander.

Timothy was filled with wonder as he looked down on the plain, for he had never seen such a city as this great Roman seaport of Troy. Sturdy walls crowned with many towers ran for three miles round the city. The marble stadium glittered in the light. A lovely open-air theatre stood there under the blue sky, facing westward, so that the eyes of the audience would hardly know whether to look down on the play or out over the harbour to the gleaming blue of the sea beyond, where the islands lay basking in the sun. An aqueduct ran over the plain carrying water with healing powers down from the hot springs on the slopes of Mount Ida.

In Troy there was a physician who, it seems, had come from a great city called Philippi on the hills two days distant across the sea from the north-west. His name was Luke.

One day, we do not know how, he and the three travellers met with one another. We cannot even tell whether he worshipped in the Name of Christ or in the name of Æsculapius, the Greek god of healing, when he met Paul first. In any case, Luke, the physician, quickly became a follower of Jesus Christ, the Great Physician. Among all the friends of Paul whose

names we know (and there are scores of them), we owe more to Luke than to all the others combined. For he it was who wrote that book—one of the greatest books in the world—in which we read the Acts of Paul and the other Apostles.

Luke was very proud of Philippi and told his new friends how the city, which was named after the great Philip of Macedonia, stood on one of the greatest roads in the Roman Empire, the Via Egnatia. This Way ran westward across the Province of Macedonia for hundreds of miles straight to Dyrrachium on the coast of the Adriatic Sea, whence men sailed over to Brundisium and rode up the Via Appia to Rome.

That night, as Paul slept, a Vision came to him. He saw—surely it must have been a vision of Luke—a man from Macedonia—holding out his hands and pleading with Paul, saying:

"Come over into Macedonia and help us.

In the morning Paul told his companions about the dream he had had. They all agreed that God had called them to go and preach the Message of the Kingdom to the people in Philippi and the other cities of Macedonia.

Going down into the harbour at Troy they took passage in a coasting sailing ship. She hove anchor, and after rowing out between the ends of the granite piers of Troy harbour, they spread sail and the ship went dipping and bobbing out into the open Ægean Sea.

BOOK III

STORM AND STRESS

THE WORLD OF ST. PAUL
Places visited by St. Paul are underlined.
English Miles
0 50 100 150 200 250 300
ITALIA
ROME
TRES TABERNAE (THREE TAVERNS)
APPII FORUM
Capua
Via Appia
PUTEOLI
Pompeii
Mt. Vesuvius
Brundisium
ADRIATIC SEA
ILLYRICUM
THRACIA
EUXINE SEA
(Black Sea)
Dyrrachium
Via Egnatia
MACEDONIA
THESSALONICA
AMPHIPOLIS
PHILIPPI
NEAPOLIS
Byzantium (Constantinople)
Josphorus
BITHYNIA
R. Halys
BEREA
APOLLONIA
SAMOTHRACE
PROPONTIS
R. Sangarius
Mt. Olympus
Ancyra
GALATIA
Larissa
Nicopolis
TROAS
Adramyttium
Pergamos
Thyatira
Cotyæum
Cæsarea
CAPPADOCIA
MITYLENE
Sardis
ASIA
ANTIOCH
THE PLATEAU
to the East
SULTAN DAGH
to Tarsus
ICONIUM
LYSTRA
Antioch
CILICIAN GATES
ANTIOCHUS
Rhegium
Mt. Etna
SICILIA
SYRACUSE
ACHAIA
CORINTH
ATHENS
CENCHREÆ
CHIOS
Smyrna
Philadelphia
EPHESUS
Roman Road
Laodicea
Colossæ
MILETUS
SAMOS
DERBE
TAURUS
KINGDOM OF ANTIOCHUS
CILICIA
Sparta
COOS
Cnidus
RHODES
PATARA
LYCIA
ATTALIA
PERGA
PAMPHYLIA
MYRA
TARSUS
Seleucia
ANTIOCH
R. Euphrates
MELITA (Malta)
CRETE
LASEA
Fair Havens
GREAT SEA
(Mediterranean)
Soloi
CYPRUS
SALAMIS
Citium
PAPHOS
Tripolis
R. Orontes
Heliopolis
Berytus
DAMASCUS
ARABIA
MT. LEBANON
MT. HERMON
SIDON
TYRE
PTOLEMAIS
CÆSAREA
ANTIPATRIS
Joppa
JERUSALEM
Gaza
DEAD SEA
KINGDOM OF AGRIPPA I
Cyrene
CYRENE
Alexandria
EGYPT
15
20
25
30
35
40

XIX

THE SHOUT OF THE SLAVE GIRL

KEEPING the island of Imbros on the port bow and passing the narrow channel of the Hellespont on their starboard beam they set the ship's course straight for Samothrace Island. They sailed on, and, when the sun was setting, they saw the tumbling waters "as it were a glassy sea mingled with fire." They then dropped anchor in the shelter of the island. For on their coasting journeys the smaller boats always anchored by night and sailed only by day.

The sun barely tinged the distant east with pink before the anchor was hauled aboard and the sail bellied and strained to the morning breeze. The ship sailed on northward, and after running for hours before a favouring wind, the sharpest-eyed of the sailors could see, on the high ground that rose behind a city and its port, the columns of a temple which caught the rays of the sun. They ran into a spacious bay and the boat was made fast at one of the wharves of Neapolis, the port of Philippi.

They had crossed the narrow water that for us divides Asia from Europe. But, when Paul sailed there, all the world of the Ægean Sea was one; and, at Troy as well as at Philippi, at Ephesus in Asia as well as at Athens in Achaia, it was above everything else Greek.

Out of Neapolis Paul and his companions climbed by a glen upward to the crest of the hill, where they could take breath and look back over the sea to the great plains and hills that they had left. Then they marched on again till, after three or four hours of hard travel, they clattered in through the gate of Philippi. They rested through the remaining days of the week.

On the Sabbath they walked down from the city, out through the gate, and down to the river bank. The stream ran through a wide glen to the sea. There were not many Jews in Philippi; so they—it seems—had no synagogue,[1] but met in the open by the river-side at a place of prayer.

Paul and Silas, Luke and Timothy, went down there together. They found a number of women met, and talked to them. Among them was a woman named Lydia, who came from Thyatira across the sea in Asia, three or four days' journey beyond Troas. She sold lovely robes from Thyatira, a city which was almost as famous as Tyre for its wonderful purple dye. Great sums of money were paid for a cloak or a toga, all woven in one piece without seam, and dyed in the purple vats at Thyatira.

Lydia sat by the river listening very closely to all that Paul told them about Jesus Christ having come to show the love of God and to lead the Greeks and Jews and all people to reverence God and each other.

In her native place of Thyatira[2] she had seen her people worshipping idols; and she had been sure that God was greater than the idols. She had seen there,

[1] This is not certain.

[2] See Rev. ii.

also, a curious worship which was partly the Jewish worship of Jehovah, but was mixed with uncleanness; and this too she felt quite sure was not really worship of the true God. The Jewish worship in Philippi, where she now lived, seemed true; yet God was still distant, though great and pure.

As Lydia listened it came over her that what Paul said was the very truth; not only because he said it, but because at the same time she felt in her own inner self as though Jesus Christ had really come to her, bringing God very close to her, and was making her feel just that love which Paul said He would bring.

So Lydia and her children and servants became Christian. She pressed Paul and the others to stay in her house while they were at Philippi. She begged them, saying:

"If you are sure that I am a believer in the Lord, come and stay at my house."

"She compelled us to come," writes Luke.

One day, as they went down to the riverside, they met a slave-girl, dressed in a flowing coloured tunic, with one end of the cloth that made the tunic thrown over her dark hair. She looked at them with a curious, wistful, intent gaze. Although she was a slave-girl, many people in Philippi, both Greeks and Romans, knew her; for they came to her to have their fortunes told. When she told fortunes the people paid her owners for it, which brought them a great deal of money.

The sensitive girl, whose daily work was to look at people and try to see at a glance what they were like so that she might tell fortunes, felt at once that

Paul's was the face of a man of great power and goodness.

She stopped and lifting up her hands, she cried out so that all the people passing by could hear:

"These men are slaves of the Most High God. They tell you the way to salvation."

People stopped to stare, first at the girl, then at

Vow to Zeus the Thunderer, for Salvation.[1]

Paul and his companions. Paul and Silas and the others walked on; but she cried out the same words again, following them all down the road, declaring

[1] "Metrophilos son of Asklepas with his wife Ammia for their own and their family's and the crops' and the village's salvation to Zeus the Thunderer a vow." (From Ramsay's *The Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the New Testament*, p. 186.)

that they were—not, like herself a slave telling fortunes for a master—but bond-slaves of God telling the way of salvation.

What did she mean? What did the startled people walking along the road understand when she called out, pointing to Paul and Silas:

"They tell you the way of salvation."

The word that she used and that we translate "salvation" was "soteria";[1] and even where she stood shrieking at the side of the road there may well have been stones like that of which a drawing stands on the previous page. A boy who knows Greek can read that one word on that stone is "soteria" in Greek capital letters. These stones were set up by men in the cities and villages of the world of the Great Sea and along the roadside in Paul's day. Each stone was a prayer to the gods for that strange something which they called "salvation."

So when the slave-girl stood there, crying out about Paul and Silas,

"They tell you the way of salvation,"

she used a word that all the people as they went by would understand. More than that, the fact that men everywhere set up these stones asking for "soteria" showed that it stood for something that they greatly desired.

The slave-girl could not leave them—would not leave them. She followed Paul and his friends down to the river bank and back again; she walked behind them through the streets till they went into Lydia's

[1] σωτηρία.

house. And all the next day she vexed them again, calling out in the street:

"These men tell you the way of salvation."

What did the word mean to the young sandalled Greek student, in his white tunic with his wax tablet slung on a tape over his arm and his writing stylus in his hand, going down to his class, or coming home from the gymnasium all glowing with exercise? To him "soteria" (salvation) meant that he should be lifted up with the fullness of the stature of an all-round man. If he cared simply for wrestling and throwing the javelin, then salvation meant being freed from every disease of body, every weakness of muscle and nerve, and being made a perfect athlete and warrior.

This young student, coming up the High Street of Philippi, knew, however (he would have learned from his tutor how the great Greek teachers like Socrates said), that he was not only made up of body and of mind, but that his inmost being was spirit. There in Philippi, as in all the Greek cities in Paul's day, men were initiated into the "mysteries" of worship of gods. As a man was led into the innermost mystery by strange ceremonial the very life of the god (they believed) came into him; so that the man became immortal as the god was immortal. This deliverance from the fear of evil and from the power of death through union with the god of the mystery-religion was, to the Greek man of Paul's day, and to many of the people of Asia, "salvation." "Salvation" then meant that the Spirit Who makes the world

and creates all men—"the Most High God"—as the Greek slave-girl in Philippi called Him in the common language of the day—would pour into this Greek student or any boy power and greatness and well-being and immortal life.

It was of such salvation as this that Paul wrote when he said—in the most wonderful sentences in the greatest letter that he or any man ever wrote:

> "I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and earth gets its name and nature, pleading with Him, out of the wealth of His glory, to give you *a mighty increase of strength* by His Spirit in the inmost man.
>
> "May Christ live in your heart as you have faith!
>
> "May you be so fixed, so firmly founded in love that you are able to grasp with all the saints, what is the meaning of the breadth, the length, the depth, the height, by knowing the love of Christ which goes beyond all knowledge.
>
> "May you be filled with the entire fullness of God."[1]

A Jewish boy, stopped on his way from the synagogue school by the sound of this piercing voice of the slave-girl, crying,

> "These men are slaves of the Most High God;
> "They tell you the way of salvation,"

would think first of the promised coming of the Prince who should lead all the chosen people, the Jews, and establish their kingdom. To a Jewish boy in Philippi

[1] The letter to the Ephesians.

the word "salvation" meant that he would have a place in the new age which the Messiah was to bring—the Kingdom of God.

The slave-girl was, both to the Greek and the Jewish way of thinking about salvation, far truer than she ever dreamed when she shouted after Paul that he told men the way of salvation: for he showed how Jesus Christ brought men the "mighty increase of strength" and the healing and cleansing from the disease of foul living that the Greek needed; to the Jew the coming of the new Kingdom; and to all the immortal life that they desired.

At last Paul's patience was gone. He turned to the girl as she was crying out to the gaping crowd of people. He called out sternly to the spirit in her that prompted her:

"In the name of Jesus Christ, I order you out of her."

Startled, the girl lost all belief in her powers. Something had gone from her. People came to her, as they had been used to doing, saying:

"I have lost a bracelet: tell me where to find it."

Or,

"I want to go on a journey: will the ship be wrecked or shall I travel safely if I go now?"

But she could not answer their questions. Her old confidence had altogether gone. So the people went away, without paying the slave-girl's masters. In a few days people stopped going to her. So the money that used to flow into the purses of her owners from

people who listened to her fortune-telling ceased to come. The masters were naturally furious.

They went out telling people what had happened, and, searching through the streets, they found Paul and Silas. Rushing up to them they seized them by the arms and robes and dragged them along the streets:

"To the prætors!" was the cry.

The prætors were the Roman officials in Philippi; very officious, very anxious to get promotion by showing how they upheld the power of Rome. The masters of the slave-girl came into the forum, where the prætors sat, dragging Paul and Silas along; and at their heels came a shouting mob.

The prætors sat in their marble chairs, on a raised dais. On either side stood the Roman lictor, each carrying the axe and the bundle of rods that were the mark of the authority of Rome.

"See these fellows," the men cried out. "Jews as they are, they are upsetting everything in the city. They tell people to take up customs that are against the Law for us as Romans to accept."

"Yes, yes," cried the crowd; "flog them, flog them."

The prætors, without asking Paul or Silas a single question as to whether this was true, or allowing them to make any defence, were fussily eager to show their Roman patriotism. Standing up they gave their orders:

"Strip them, flog them."

XX

EARTHQUAKE

QUICKLY the lictors set about their horrible work. Slaves seized Paul and Silas and, roughly stripping off their robes, bared their backs. They were tied by their hands to the whipping-post. The crowd, all eager to see these wandering Jews thrashed, gathered round. The bundles of rods were unstrapped.

Throwing back the sleeve of his right arm for freer movement, each of the two lictors brought down his rod with cruel strokes on Paul and Silas. Every blow cut through the skin or left a livid weal across the back. The sight of the blood flowing down caused no voice to be raised to question the judgment or to plead for pity.

Racked with the terrible pain, Paul and Silas felt their robes being thrown over their tortured backs. They were led out of the blazing sunlight of the Philippi forum toward the abysmal darkness of the prison. A square building of thick windowless walls faced them. A rough strong wooden door was opened.

They were thrust into the dark entrance. We can imagine the Roman soldiers laughing as they left the prison, repeating to the jailer in their jeering way the words the slave-girl had shouted through the city,

"Here are the men who 'show you the way of salvation.' Keep them safe." The jailer took them and, because he was specially charged to keep them safe, led them into a further dungeon, pitch dark, where the jingle of chains on the ankles and wrists of groaning prisoners told the story of the misery of the place.

Paul and Silas felt the clasp of the shackles snapped on to their arms; their feet were clapped into stocks. Each shackle was attached to a chain of which the other end was fastened to a staple in the wall. The stench of the place, the groaning and oaths of the other prisoners, the dull ache of their wounded bodies, made sleep impossible to Paul and Silas.

Then there came back into their minds the songs of their own people; and they remembered that though their prison was dark as the pit, it was still a place where they could talk to their God. So, as the slow hours crept on, they prayed and sang joyful songs that Paul had learned on the roof-top at Tarsus when he was a boy. The other prisoners stopped their cursing to listen to such songs as this:

"You that seek after God
Let your heart live.
For the Lord heareth the needy
And does not despise his prisoners."

and again:

"God is our refuge and strength,
A very present help in trouble.
Therefore will we not fear, though the earth do change
And though the mountains be moved in the heart of the seas;
Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled,
Though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof."[1]

[1] Ps. 69. Ps. 46.

Then the stillness of the night was broken by a rumbling. The singing ceased. The ground rocked beneath them; the walls shook. The staples being loosened from between the stones, the chains fell with a clang. The stocks were wrenched open with the force of the earthquake. The pillars of the gateway shook and the hinge-supports of the doors came loose. The bar across the two doors, loosened from its sockets, fell to the ground. The heavy doors swung open with a crash.

The jailer by this time was wide awake. Leaping out, he saw the stars and the moon shining into the entrance of the prison.

"The prisoners have escaped," was his first thought. It spelt ruin for him, a Roman jailer. Death in an awful form would be meted out to him for having let his prisoners go while he slept. He snatched his short sword from its sheath and turned its point on himself. Another moment and he would have thrown himself upon his sword and killed himself. But a voice came upon his ear.

Paul, sitting in the black darkness of the inner prison, could see the figure of the jailer standing in the open gateway, and his eyes caught the glint of the moonlight on his sword. So Paul shouted out:

"Do not harm yourself. We are all here."

The jailer turned to the dungeon from which the voice came, but he could see nothing.

"Torches! Torches!" he cried.

As the assistants came with the lights, he rushed in and saw before him Paul and Silas. He set his men to work fastening the other prisoners. In front of

him were the men after whom he had heard the girl shouting:

"These men show you the way of salvation."

The belief that the Greeks and Jews held, that an earthquake was the act of God, was strong on him. The fear of the unseen gripped him. He remembered the cry of the slave-girl.

"Sirs," he said, falling in terror before these prisoners of his, "what must I do to be saved?"

"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ," said Paul and Silas, "and then you will be saved, you and your household as well."

The jailer brought his wife and his children to Paul, who spoke to them about Jesus.

Then the jailer told his wife to get some water and oil. She hurried to do this, and he led Paul and Silas up into his house. The robes were very gently taken from their backs, and the jailer took the basin his wife handed to him, bathed the wounds and poured healing and soothing oil on them.

The whole family was then at once baptised, and they all felt overjoyed because they believed in God. A meal was quickly laid, and Paul and Silas sat down to restore their strength.

As the dawn came up, the lictors marched down from the prætors with an order.

"Release these men," they said.

The jailer, delighted that his new friends were not to be imprisoned any more, went to them and said:

"The prætors have sent to release you. Come out then, and go in peace."

He was indeed startled when he heard Paul say:

"No, indeed! They flogged us in public in the forum, and without a trial; flogged Roman citizens. They throw us into prison. And now they are going to get rid of us secretly! Let the prætors come here themselves and take us out!"

It was the strangest message these lictors had ever been told to carry or the prætors had ever received. But Paul had taken measure of the position. He knew that if it was reported to Rome that the prætors had flogged Roman citizens, the officials would not only be recalled and degraded from their positions—they would be ruined.

The prætors, who had been so fussily anxious only the day before to uphold the dignity of Rome by flogging Paul and Silas, were now panic-stricken at the peril they were in of losing their own positions.

They climbed down from their rostrum and went down personally to the prison to plead with Paul and Silas to leave the prison. The judges were now at the bar; the prisoner had them at his mercy.

Publicly they took Paul and Silas by the hand and led them out, and said:

"We ask you to go away from the city, as we are afraid of a further riot."

Paul and Silas then went to the house where they had been staying—the home of Lydia. There they cheered the other Christians, with Luke and Timothy, telling them to keep the work of spreading the message in Philippi going strongly and to be cheerfully prepared for trouble.

Lydia, their hostess, would spare no trouble to get healing oils for the wounded backs of Paul and Silas.

Preparations were made for them to leave—not to turn back and cross the sea again to Troas, but to go on still further westward. The city of Philippi, as we know, was at the eastward end of the great Egnatian Way, "that military way of ours," as Cicero proudly said, "which connects us with the Hellespont." So Paul and Silas—who had come into the city probably in October of the year A.D. 50—left on a morning in the early winter of the same year, riding westward along the marble road. It is likely that Paul had in his tunic a letter from one of the Jews in Philippi to a friend named Jason in the city to which they were travelling.

XXI

THE GOAD OF GOD

ALL day they rode, passing along a valley among the heather hills, and at last came to where the waters of the Strymon broadened into a lake that reflected the clouds and the autumn skies. Near the lake among the hills they came on a great city. The City of the Nine Ways, the proud citizens used to call it because of the roads that radiated from it, though its real name was Amphipolis. If they had been looking over Luke's shoulder when he wrote the account of Paul's journeys, the Amphipolitan people would have told him to scratch out what he had written when he said that his own Philippi was "the first city of the district." For Amphipolis was older and larger than Philippi.

Rising in the morning Paul and Silas set out again for a second day's long travel. This stage of their journey lay across the broad neck of a peninsula of many mountains. But, although the mountains were high and wild and the country rough, the great road pointed straight onward, and Paul and Silas urged on their beasts till the gates of another city faced them as the sun set behind the towers and roofs of Apollonia.

A third day's travel of over thirty miles followed, and they came to the place where they meant to stay

for some time. It was called Thessalonica by Alexander the Great, for that was his sister's name. As they went under the east gate they would see the afternoon sun shining through a noble triumphal arch along the great marble way that ran straight as an arrow across the city. The arch was there to recall the great triumph when the battle of Philippi was won by Octavia, and of Mark Antony who, you remember, had been in Tarsus half a century before Paul was born.

Up the steep streets of Thessalonica they climbed, till they came to the house of Jason, who welcomed these two travelling fellow-Jews—little knowing the nest of hornets his kindness was to bring about his ears.

Down in the harbour many ships swung at anchor, while the sailors got their vessels ready to sail down the gulf into the Ægean Sea. The porters ran across the planks between the ships and the dock, carrying jars of corn and bales of cloth.

In this busy harbour city Paul found purchasers for his handiwork. He settled down to work. "You remember our hard labour and toil, how we worked at our trade night and day," [1] he reminded the people at Thessalonica afterward in a letter. He wished to preach without being kept by anybody, so that people should not be able to say that he was a travelling Jew talking new things simply to make a living for himself.

He went down on the Sabbath to the synagogue, and there he spoke to the Jews, and the Greeks who worshipped with them.

[1] 1 Thess. ii. 9.

As he stood up there near the dimly burning lamp, his eager face alive with desire that they should catch from him the light that he had, all could see that every word of Paul's burned with fiery conviction. But could it be true? they asked, that the Messiah had come. They had waited, how long!—through the centuries they had listened and looked for the coming of the King.

Now here was this astonishing traveller who had come post-haste across from their own native land to say that truly He, the One sent from God, in the person of Jesus Christ, had come. But how? That was the disturbing, unbelievable part of the story. He had suffered, had been condemned to death, and executed by the Roman Government. Was it likely that such a one was God's anointed Messiah? It was a stumbling-block to them. Yet Paul declared that He was the Christ, that He was proved to be so by the fact that God had raised Him from death. Paul knew this (he said), for Christ had spoken to him on the road to Damascus.

On a week-day Paul went on with his tent-making work, and spoke at the same time to those who would hear him. He talked in this way to all kinds of people. The dyer, with his arms blue to the elbows, bending over his vats; the potter shaping the clay on his whirling wheel; the leather-worker making crimson shoes or a saddle for one of the merchants of the city; the shipwrights bending the tough wood to its place on the bow of a new boat;—all would hear Paul. Many also of the wives and sisters of the councillors and wealthy merchants in Thessalonica—dressed in

those exquisite silks that were brought into the harbour from far-off Persia—also listened to him, and were convinced.

So for Sabbath after Sabbath Paul spoke; and in the week the Greeks and Jews would come, while he was at work stitching his canvas, and would ask questions and argue with him. One by one and in increasing numbers they came to believe that what he said was true.

In Thessalonica, however, just as in Antioch-in-Pisidia, Lystra, and Iconium, there were many Jews who thought that Paul's audacity in declaring first that a Man who had hung on the cross as the Son of God, and then that He had come for the love of the other nations as well as the Jews, was a blend of blasphemy and treason against the race.

They went round whispering to loungers at the street corners who were spoiling for a riot, and said:

"These fellows who have come into the city are trying to break down the Roman rule and to put up a new king in the place of the Emperor."

Soon they had gathered a mob of ne'er-do-wells. "To the house of Jason" was the cry, for they knew that Paul and Silas lived there.

Jason heard the noise of a rabble coming down the street in which he lived. Looking out he could see them filling the road and shouting, waving their hands in the air. Now they were actually stopping in front of his house. They were coming and battering at his door.

"We want Paul and Silas," they shouted, and at-

tacked Jason's house to get at them; but neither of the two was in the house.

In disappointed rage they seized hold of Jason and some of the other Christians, and dragged them along to the rulers of the city, called the politarchs—or "city-chiefs." For Thessalonica was a free Roman city, and appointed its own rulers, not receiving prætors from Rome.

It was difficult in the confused howling of voices to hear what was really said. But the politarchs made one man come up and give a statement.

"These fellows who upset the whole world have come here to Thessalonica. Jason here"—and they pointed to him—"has welcomed them. They all break the decrees of Cæsar; for they say that someone else, named Jesus, is to be king."

A yell of patriotic rage went up.

The politarchs were disturbed when they heard this. It was the most awful cry that could be raised in the empire,—this charge of treachery and rebellion against Cæsar. The Jews raised this charge against Jesus, and now against His pioneer missionary. But the rulers evidently felt that the matter would blow over most easily if they took easy measures. They, therefore, bound over Jason and the other brethren to keep the peace.

Those who followed Christ, nevertheless, knew quite well that the Jews would start a more serious attack on Paul and Silas when they next appeared, and feared it might mean their being executed. They, therefore, persuaded the two that it would be better to leave the city till the fury of the Jews cooled.

The Brothers (as the early Christians called one another) could hardly wrench themselves away from Paul. But it must be done, for his sake and their own. The two comrades must leave that very night. Paul gave the Brothers at Thessalonica parting advice as they gathered in the darkening twilight.

We can imagine with what tense faces they would lean forward to listen to Paul, as he told them in very straight, strong words how the Lord Jesus wanted them to live. We know some of the things that he said, for he recalled them to the people in a letter that he wrote later.

You must keep clear from unclean living.

You should never play a fraud on your brother.

You will not need to be told to love one another; God Himself tells you that.

Stick to your own task.

Work with your hands (and as he said it, Paul might almost unconsciously lift up his tough hands blackened with the day and night work on the heavy tent-canvas), so that the outside world respect your straightness, and so that you can support yourselves.

We must be clad in a coat of mail, made of faith, and love; and on our heads the helmet of the hope of salvation.

Keep a check on loafers.

Never lose your temper with anyone.

See that nobody pays back evil for evil.

But always make a point of being kind to one another and to all the world.

Rejoice all the time and never give up prayer.
Thank God for everything.[1]

Between the hour after sunset when darkness rushes swiftly over the land, and the rising of the moon, Paul and Silas quietly escaped. They passed by the sentries at the west gate, without challenge, into the open road. The leagues of the Egnatian Way stretched before them. The moon came up, and its cold light blanched the empty length of the road into ghostly whiteness.

Silently they strode out along the road in the cool freshness of an early summer night. With the memory of the rods and the prison of Philippi in their hearts and the shouting of the frenzied mob of Thessalonica still in their ears, they went out, despised and rejected, each, like his Master, not "having where to lay his head."

They went, however, not through the east gate homeward to seek some quiet and refuge, but under the west gate out into the Road of Empire to take what new adventure should befall them.

[1] 1 Thess. iv. and v.

XXII

THE SEA OF ISLANDS

PAUL and Silas walked westward along the pavement of the Egnatian Way for some miles. It was probably May now, in the year A.D. 51. They had been in Thessalonica some six months. By this time, it may well be, Timothy was with them, having come along from Philippi. He joined them either at Thessalonica or at the city to which they were now travelling. When he came he was able to tell Paul how Luke was giving new life to the people in Philippi by his teaching, preaching, and healing.

By the time the dawn had come up they came to a fork in the road; the paved Roman road going on like an arrow to the right. They took a rougher road to the left, running south-westward. This road led them along through woods, where they would be glad of the shade from the now scorching sunshine, and over rolling hills till, at last, they saw ahead of them the compact, secure little city of Berœa, which "lies at the foot of Mount Bernius."[1] A Roman like Cicero, because Berœa was off the great road from Rome, called it "an out-of-the-way place."[2]

When Paul stood up to speak to the people there he found more friendly faces than he had met any-

[1] Strabo I, p. 511. Fragment 26.

[2] Cicero In Piso, 36.

where in his travel. They did not simply take everything that he said as true on first hearing. But, as he argued that all the story of the life of the Israelites and their Law and Prophets proved that Jesus was the Christ—the Messiah—they took out their well-fingered rolls of parchment, and turned them to see whether the parts Paul quoted agreed with what he said. So convinced were they that many of the Jews believed, and with them were large numbers of the best-known Greek men and women in Berœa.

Travelling Jews going up on business from Berœa into Thessalonica which Paul had left would naturally talk to their brother Jews about how Paul and Silas and Timothy were persuading the people to worship in the name of Christ. Some of the Jews were furiously angry with the incorrigible apostles and came hot-foot from Thessalonica along the road to Berœa. They began to work up the mob into a frenzy against Paul, whom they singled out as the "ringleader."

The Brothers came together to discuss what ought to be done. They decided that the best thing was that Paul should go down to the harbour and sail away, while Silas and Timothy stayed in Berœa to keep the work quietly going on. It was a great wrench to Paul; not only because he was leaving Berœa itself, but because it cut him off more completely from the people whom he gloried in above all his friends in all the cities—the Brothers in Thessalonica and in Philippi.

None of them knew where it was best for Paul to go. They only knew that he must go, that the life

of their great leader, whose speech had changed the whole world for them, was of unspeakable importance; and that, therefore, some of them must go with him and bring back news of the place in which Paul settled.

So, without knowing where he would sail to next, Paul left Berœa along with friends from that city, like the Greek Christian, Sopater, son of Pyrrhus. They went down the valleys, riding toward the coast hour after hour through the midsummer heat. Paul had been driven on by an invisible goad that would not let him rest; driven from the prison of Philippi along the Egnatian Way; hounded out of Thessalonica; his life threatened at Berœa; it must have seemed to him as though he would never have "where to lay his head." He seemed like a tent-maker of the lives of men, who had no sooner begun to weave a piece of canvas and had got the pattern of warp and woof prepared than he was driven away—to start again and to be interrupted once more. How futile it seemed! But what really happened was that instead of Paul completing his tent at one place, he left at one centre after another men and women who had caught his pattern and his plan and would work it out after he had left them. He was the scout riding on perilous work ahead of the main army; the heroic pioneer missionary.

"I can, in Christ Jesus, be proud of my work for God," he said. "From Jerusalem right round (across Asia Minor and the Ægean) to Illyricum (behind Berœa) I have been able to complete the forth-telling of the Good News of Christ—my ambition always

being to preach only in places where Christ's name has never been heard before. So that

> "They should see which had never learned about Him,
> And they who had never heard of Him should understand."[1]

The shimmer of blue and gold caught his eye as Paul came out at last in sight of the Sea of Islands, —the Ægean. They hastened down to the harbour called Dium. There may have been boats just ready to sail to Neapolis, the port of Philippi, or to the harbour at Thessalonica; but Paul would have to pass them by. Then he saw a coasting vessel preparing to put to sea, with Greek letters on the prow, above the eyes that were painted there so that the boat could see its way!

Inquiring of the master-mariner, they found that she was sailing for Athens. Taking passage, Paul and his friends went aboard and at dawn felt the swing of the sea under the vessel as she ran out, hugging the mountain coast of Thessaly on her starboard.

Young Sopater, sitting under the shade of the tall sail, watching the coast go sliding past and all the mountains and the sea glowing in the July sun, could tell Paul how each mountain and headland had stories of the battles of the Greeks that his father Pyrrhus had told to him. There was Olympus which his fathers had always believed was the council-seat of the gods. Now the bows of the boat swung westward into a lovely narrow channel between Artemisium, situated on an island headland, and the mainland.

The pillars of a noble temple to Artemis (Diana)

[1] See map and Rom. xv. 17-21.

stood there looking over the ocean. As they passed into the channel, Sopater—who would be likely to have read the history of his people by Herodotus—could tell Paul how, from the day when a storm out on this coast beat upon the Persian Fleet—the Greeks had called Neptune (the sea god) "the Saviour." But Paul would feel a shudder at the thought of this idol, half-fish, half-man, receiving the name of Saviour that truly belonged alone to Jesus.

Right in front of them, as though stopping their journey, was a shore backed by hills. Among those hills (Sopater could tell Paul as they stood at the bows looking up the blue waters), at the Gates of the Boiling Springs (Thermopylæ), three hundred Greeks defied the armies of Persia in the most famous battle of the world. The man at the rudder-paddle turned the ship south-east again, and the vessel scudded along —helped maybe by the strong north winds that sweep down through the mountains. At length they came out from this long channel into the open sea once more.

Round another headland, a shining Temple of Athene, built of marble from the quarries of Pentelicus which they passed farther on, showed that they were now nearing the wonderful city of this Victory-goddess. At last in smooth water they beat up the gulf till the boat slid into the crowded harbour of Piræus.

The companions from Berœa now got ready to sail back to tell their friends at home that they had safely piloted Paul far beyond the reach of his venomous enemies from Thessalonica.

"Tell Silas and my son Timothy to sail to me with

all speed," said Paul as the men went aboard the little sailing ship that was to carry them back to Berœa.

As he stood on the harbour side, resting one sandalled foot on a stone mooring pillar and watching the ship gather way under the steady beat of the oars, he was all alone. He was alone for the first time since he had walked across the bridge into Antioch in Syria with Barnabas eight and a half years ago.[1] He was lonely indeed without his close friends—Silas and Timothy.

Paul now grasped his staff and, turning his back on the busy harbour, strode up the broad portway that linked the harbour of Piræus with Athens. He walked between the tremendous but already partly ruined walls that ran from the port straight up to the city of Athene. Ahead he saw, lifted up on a mighty rock, the crown and glory of Greece,—the deathless beauty of the Parthenon. Before that majestic temple stood the exquisite and noble statue of Athene which seemed as though it were aflame. The bronze figure and its gleaming golden crown were caught in the glory of an August sunset.

Paul was in Athens.

[1] Spring of A.D. 43-August, 51.

XXIII

THE SCORN OF ATHENS

PAUL was in Athens.

The sleepy Roman sentinel, as he glanced under his proud, heavy eyelids at the travel-stained Paul in his cloak and sandals, could never guess that the greatest man in the world of that day had at that moment entered the most learned and brilliant city in the Roman Empire. Still more wildly absurd would it have seemed to the sentry if a passing prophet had told him that, when all the worship of the gods of Athens had vanished like morning mist, and when the last sentry of the Roman Empire had fallen behind her broken walls, the worship which Paul that day brought into the city would endure and spread to the ends of the earth.

Though the long street from the Piræus gate to the heart of the city was crowded, Paul was very lonely. Up the street went merchants riding on asses with slaves running alongside, coming up from the port. Greek mothers led their children along the shaded side-walk, with its marble pillars, past the little wooden shops where you might buy figs and dates, olives and oil, and goat's-milk cheese. Here a mother stopped to bargain with the crafty merchant for a length of buff-coloured linen for a tunic for her boy who had grown out of his old one; there a man stopped

at the armourer's to test the blade of a Damascene sword.

Lusty Romans, keen-witted Greeks, olive-skinned Syrians, swarthy Egyptians, rubbed shoulders with Paul as he walked up the street; but they only made him feel more utterly alone. For he longed greatly for his old friend Silas and his "son" Timothy, the companions with whom he had tramped the open road and sailed and shared meals and prison for so many days. He hoped that they would hurry to him when they heard his message.

Paul's feet carried him on the next Sabbath to the door of the Jews' meeting-house, where he spoke to them after the Word had been read. The Jews, and the Greeks who had come to believe in Jehovah, listened eagerly to the new truths that Paul poured forth.

On other days he walked about the streets and markets of Athens through the hot August days. The sun was climbing over the Ægean Sea when Paul would issue forth in the cool of the morning. He always loved cities and all the shifting many-coloured scenes of the streets. He preferred them to the country. So we can best imagine that he would not walk out to listen to the bees droning in the sunshine over the purple heather of Hymettus, gathering the very "honey of the gods." Nor would he stroll by the Ilissus stream, that ran by the Hill of Hymettus and watered the Grove of the Lyceum, under whose shade Aristotle in the old days had taught his disciples.

Paul would, we can believe, be drawn to the great marble Stadium between Hymettus and the city, where he could see the crowds of Athenians, with a sprin-

kling of country people and sailors, watching the sports about which he wrote again and again in his letters. The wrestlers, the brawny boxers, and the lithe running men in their short white tunics, trained there for the great Pan-athenaic games which drew people from all the country-side to Athens. The shouts surged to the sky as the teams of straining horses, white with sweat, thundered round the course, with the drivers in their reeling chariots cracking their long whips above the maddened horses' heads.

Walking from the Stadium toward the city Paul would see the giant temple of Jupiter Olympus rearing its gleaming marble columns; and beyond in the distance he could see the still lovelier Parthenon, set like a priceless jewel on the Acropolis. Coming along the street around the foot of the Acropolis, he would see the black Nubian slaves, and maybe British ones also, waiting outside the theatre of Dionysius which was cut in the living rock on the south side of the hill and facing the distant sea.

The chattering Athenian audience came pouring from the theatre discussing the actors and the play. The slaves ran with their draped and gilded litters for the ladies. The long-robed priests, for whom the seventy marble seats in the front row were reserved, might be arguing with some Epicurean philosophers as to whether drama ought to reveal truth or should simply give pleasure. Doubtless they would come to the conclusion that, in this great play of Æschylus which they had watched, the author had given them both truth and pleasure.

As Paul passed along he saw many altars on which

men left their offerings; this man in order that the god Mercury should protect him while travelling, or this mother that Æsculapius should make her sick boy well again; and that youth that Venus should give him success in love, or Diana bring skill in hunting, or Minerva grant courage in war. And Paul saw one strange altar on which was carved:

TO AN UNKNOWN GOD (ΑΓΝΩΣΤΩ ΘΕΩ)

When Paul climbed the steep way up the one approach to the Acropolis, and passed through gate after gate on to the shining summit, he was face to face with the loveliest building in the world, the Parthenon. It stood there looking out over Athens to the sea, perfect in its exquisite proportions, with its lovely pillars and shaded portico, and the marvellous sculptures of dancing youths and maidens, priests, warriors and horses, oxen and garlands.[1] And within the Parthenon was the gigantic statue of Athene, the goddess of Wisdom, whose special care was thought to be over this city named after her.

Paul felt a stirring within him as he looked on the altars of Athens and thought of the countless gods whom the people worshipped. For he knew that in truth all the power that the people believed to dwell in Athene and Æsculapius and the other gods, really belonged only to the one God whose image could not be carved with hands—Who is Wisdom and Health and Love and Justice. This was the most learned

[1] Some of these very sculptures on which Paul's eyes rested may be seen in the British Museum—the Elgin marbles.

city in all the world: yet Paul knew with a clear flaming certainty that he had a Truth which contained and surpassed all the truth its scholars knew. He could see that what these Athenian worshippers of three thousand idols desired to know was Life—yes, to know the real truth and the way to live. And Paul was quite sure that Jesus Christ was the Way and the Truth and the Life.

Paul went down from the Acropolis and passed the sacred rock-cleft in which the Furies dwelt; went by the holy place under which Agamemnon's bones lay buried, beyond the hill where the High Council of the Areopagus sat in judgment; and walked under a beautifully carved marble archway into the Agora—the market-place.

The hum of busy voices fell on Paul's ears, men chaffering over the prices of their wares—selling and buying fish from the Ægean Sea, woollen stuff from the Greek hill-villages, purple cloths from Tyre, earthen jars and pitchers and dishes, lovely glass vessels from Sidon. There were cheese and olives, bread and wine for the housewives; for the students of the University, parchment and vellum and wax tablets. On a raised platform slaves lounged in the sun while the auctioneer knocked them down to the highest bidder.

On one side of the market-place Paul saw a group of men in long white robes fringed with purple and blue and yellow, talking in a secluded shaded place, where there were no booths. Some of the elder men rested on a marble seat; younger men stood listening. The younger men were students at this University of

Athens. They had come from all over the Empire to get wisdom—men from Rome and Corinth, Ephesus and Tarsus, Antioch and Damascus. One or another of them would occasionally, after a ripple of laughter had gone round the group, make a note of a smart saying with his pointed ivory stylus on his wax tablet. Paul went near to the group and listened. They were arguing, using long difficult words about very high thoughts. Some of them said that God was simply all the Life that there is in trees and animals and men, all the force that drives the winds and the seas. The world that we see is the garment of that serene, unfeeling Power which is God. Man should aim, these Stoics said, at reaching a like serene freedom from feelings of mere pain or pleasure.

Paul knew their arguments very well; indeed he probably knew all about them when he was quite young in his native place, Tarsus. For in Tarsus University itself this way of looking at things—called the Stoic philosophy—had been taught for many years.

"Our teacher, Epicurus, teaches us," one of the speakers on the other side might say, "that we must 'First believe that God is a Being blessed and immortal, according to the notion of a god commonly held amongst man; and, so believing, you will not say anything about Him that is contrary to everlasting life and to happiness. Men should aim—not to be above feeling—as you Stoics say—but to take pleasure, not in wild excesses, but in quietly seizing each moment and pressing out all the happiness that it can give.'"

Then the Epicurean ceased and a Stoic asked him clever questions that would lead him into contradicting

himself if he was not very careful. This way of arguing by asking questions they called the Socratic method, because a very great thinker, Socrates, had used it in Athens centuries before Paul was there.

Paul's brain was keen and his tongue was swift. He had not listened long before he dropped a question that made the Greek debaters turn to see whose was this new voice. His eyes flashed keenly as he met and answered the questions that came back swiftly to him. We do not know exactly what he said to them, but he certainly spoke about Jesus and His Resurrection, and argued that Jesus alone really told men the nature of God, for which they were groping. They saw from his face and his clothes that he was not a University man. Some thought he must be just a half-educated crank from the provinces.

"What would this 'smatterer' say?" sneered one.

"He seems to be talking about some foreign gods," said another.

They felt superior to this "outsider," but their curiosity got the better of them—for the Athenians loved nothing better than to hear the latest craze from the East. So the leaders decided to take him from the clamour of the market-place to a quieter spot, where Paul could explain the whole of his new teaching without distraction.

"Come," they said, as they took hold of his arm and led him away, "let us know what is this new teaching that you are talking about. For you have brought some strange things to our ears. We wish to know, therefore, just what these things mean." They led him toward a long sloping rocky hill, called the Areo-

pagus, a few hundred yards away to the south of the market-place.

In the side of the hill and facing the market-place a little plateau had been cut in the living rock. It was in the shadow comparatively early in the day, and was quiet. Here the men paused [1]—Athenian and foreign—grouped round, stylus in hand, to listen; and behind them the crowd of inquisitive loiterers waited, listening. Among these was a woman from a foreign land whose name was Damaris.

Paul had had little time to prepare what he would say to this learned and critical audience, but his brain went swift and sure to the very thing that would grip their attention and make them feel that he understood their minds. "Men of Athens," he began, "I see at every turn that you are unusually given to the worship of deities. As I walked along and scanned the objects of your worship, I actually came upon an altar bearing this inscription:

TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.

What you worship in ignorance, I proclaim to you. God," he continued, appealing to the belief of the Stoics and Epicureans, "the God who made the world and all things in it, He, as Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in shrines made with human hands."

Paul would point to the lovely temple of Theseus that shone in the sunlight on a hill beyond the market-place.

"He is not served by human hands," continued

[1] The reasons for believing that this was the spot on which Paul spoke I have given in full in *The Expository Times*, 1915.

Paul, "as if He needed anything; for it is He who gives life and breath and all things to all men. He has made of one nature all nations of men, to live all over the earth, fixing their allotted periods and the boundaries of their abodes, meaning them to seek for God on the chance of finding Him, in their groping for Him. But indeed this God is close to each one of us, for it is in Him that we live and move and exist; as some of your own poets have said:

"'For his very offspring we are.'"

The wise Athenians must have raised their eyes in surprise to hear this Jew quoting their own poets. Paul may well have learned at Tarsus this maxim of the poem from which he quoted. For Cleanthes, who was a Stoic philosopher, had more than three hundred years earlier written a poem which was known wherever the Greek language was spoken. It ran:

"God, most glorious, called by many a name,
Nature's great King, through endless years the same;
Omnipotent, who by thy just decree
Controllest all, hail Zeus! for unto thee
Behoves it mortals in all lands to call.
We are thine offspring."[1]

"After all," we can imagine some of them saying, "this Jew has more in him than we had expected. He knows something of our philosophy and our poets."

[1] Or he may have been quoting the less known poet Aratus, who had lived in the third century B.C. in Paul's own province Cilicia. Aratus wrote:

"Zeus fills all the city streets,
All the nations' crowded marts; fills the watery deeps,
And heavens: every labour needs the help of Zeus.
His offspring are we."

Paul went on, with the men sitting chin in hand, listening.

"Well, as the race of God, we ought not to imagine that the divine nature resembles gold or silver or stone, the graven product of human art and invention. The ages of such ignorance God overlooked: but He now charges men that they all everywhere do repent, inasmuch as He has fixed a day on which He will judge the world justly by a Man whom He has destined for this. And He has given proof of this to all by raising Him from the dead."

"Pshaw! Absurd!" cried some of his hearers, stung into interruption by the mad notion—as it seemed to them—of anyone who had once been dead ever being raised to life again. And some of them laughed at him.

One man, however, a member of the court called after the Areopagus, sat quiet, meditating. His name was Dionysius. He saw at a glance how true Paul's speech had been, up till those strange last words. Might not that tale too of Paul's about the resurrection be true? After all, if God made men, surely He could bring one again from the dead.

The meeting broke up, and the men strolled back to the Agora with some joking word about wasting time on the mad ideas of a Jew whose speech they would forget in a week. But that speech is now the most famous in all history—while the very names of those men are forgotten, except the one who was now waiting to speak with Paul.

"I would like to hear more of this teaching," said Dionysius the Areopagite.

In the background the woman, Damaris, also lingered, wishing to know more from Paul's lips.

These two, with some others, sat with Paul while he, with all his soul in his words, poured out the story of how God had shown His love to the whole world by giving His Son Jesus to live and love and die for men, and had shown that Jesus was indeed His Son and the true Saviour of men by raising Him from the grave.

At last Paul's time was up. He had come in August, and it was still early autumn: his stay had measured only weeks. Nor had he been persecuted. But the Voice called him onward from the icy flippancy of Athens, telling him he could do better work in another place.

He girt his tunic about his loins and grasping his stick once more made his way down the long street and out through the Piræus gate, until the waters of the harbour were at his feet. He boarded one of the many boats going westward up the gulf to Cenchreæ, the eastern landing place of Corinth.

And men to-day do not judge Paul with the sneering judgment that the wise men of Athens passed upon him; they rather judge the Athenians of that day by their failure to know the supreme greatness of the hero and saint who now left their gates for ever. Of all the men who ever spoke in Athens the greatest were Socrates and Paul. Athens slew Socrates by poison. It froze Paul out with a laugh.

XXIV

THE CHALLENGE TO CORINTH

WITH the morning sun astern, the ship in which Paul had taken passage tacked up the broad gulf past Salamis Island toward Cenchreæ. As she ran westward and the day wore on, the purple mountains drew closer to the gulf, till the waters lapped the feet of the hills.

Paul, as he stood at the bow, gazing toward the now setting sun, could see the stone piers of Cenchreæ harbour, backed by the busy port town, and—as they drew still nearer—he could catch, beyond the town itself, the gleam of marble temples through the trees.

The boat threaded its way through the shipping of the port, where Paul could hear the songs and the shouting of the sailors, black sailors from the Nile, and swarthy men out of Spain, with Phœnicians, Syrians from Antioch and men of Tarsus and Rhodes and Ephesus. The whole port was alive with movement and sound; the thud of sacks thrown down on the wharves from the ships' holds, the endless processions of men with jars of oil on their shoulders passing over the gangways, the grunting camels and the donkeys being loaded with corn and wine and cheese and silks.

Cenchreæ was one of the busiest harbours in the world, for it was the gateway from the East to Corinth

and along the Gulf of Corinth to Italy and all the West. But every large ship that came must unload at Cenchreæ, so that the camels and asses and the bullock wagons might carry the goods across the nine miles of isthmus that lay between the two gulfs. Smaller boats were often not unloaded but were dragged over rollers across the land all day by slaves, and then slipped into the gulf on the other side.

Paul landed at the harbour, and next morning took the crowded road for Corinth, across the isthmus over which the caravans were bearing the loads from port to port. On this isthmus, at the place where it is little more than four miles wide, the great Isthmian games were held, which drew over thirty thousand Greeks from all the country round, from the towns along the two gulfs and from the mountain lands of Greece, from Parnassus and Helicon and Delphi.

The finest athletes from the different cities came together there every two years for these great Isthmian games,—they wrestled, and boxed with iron-studded leather straps over their knuckles; they fought lions from Africa and tigers from the East simply armed with shield and sword; they flung spears and threw quoits and ran foot races. Amid the frenzied cheers of the Greeks, the charioteers drove their quivering galloping horses round the stadium.

The prize to each winner was simply a wreath cut by a priest with a golden knife from trees in the sacred grove near the sea where the Temple of Neptune stood. When the proud winner went back to his little city among the hills, with his withering wreath in his hand, the Council and the people would gather to cheer and

wave ribbons in the air; and a sculptor would make a statue of the winner in marble, and set it up in the city square, and on the head of the statue a wreath was carved.

Paul passing on went through the Cenchreæ gate of the city of Corinth, and straight along the street till he came out into the open market where men sold goods from all over the world of that day. The market and the streets were not old, for the old city had been wiped out by a conqueror centuries earlier. But Julius Cæsar—a short time before he started the conquest of Britain—and some fifty years before Paul was born—had rebuilt Corinth. The city was now immensely rich, for the merchants of Rome and Puteoli, Brundisium and Spain brought their wares to Corinth in exchange with the merchants of Philippi and Thessalonica, Ephesus, Smyrna and Rhodes. And on all the goods that changed hands Corinth itself levied toll.

The sound of the click and hiss and "clump" of a hand-loom caught Paul's ear. He looked into a little open shop and saw a man of his own handicraft making tent-cloth. In the tent-maker's booth lay ropes and lengths of cloth, poles and pegs.

Paul saw at once that the tent-maker was a Jew. He stopped and spoke to him, saying that he himself was a tent-maker.

"My name is Aquila," the Jew told him as he paused in his work. "I have come with my wife Priscilla from Rome. We have been driven from Rome with many, many more by the Emperor. For Claudius has passed an edict exiling all Jews from

Rome on pain of death. My old home was far away in Pontus."

Then Paul would tell Aquila that his home was away in Cilicia. Pontus lay far north of Cilicia on the shores of the Black Sea.

Aquila invited Paul into his house. Paul went into the shadow of the dark workshop and into the living room behind where Priscilla was at her housework. The three soon became fast friends and it was settled that Paul should live with them while he was at Corinth. Paul set to work with needle and thread upon the heavy hair-cloth, making tents so that he should be earning his own living.

At night when work was done Aquila would tell Paul about Corinth and sometimes Paul would go out in the day to see the city. Close behind Corinth he saw, overshadowing the city, the great cone of the Acro-Corinth, a hill that leapt sheer out of the plain, a thousand feet in height. Up the one steep path along the western face of the hill men climbed to the wall-surrounded citadel at the top. Like a crown on the height itself stood a beautiful Temple of Venus, attended by a thousand priestesses, dressed in white robes, yet living unclean lives that spread evil through all the city beneath. If Paul climbed the steep path to that hill-top he would see looking east the roofs of Cenchreæ and the blue gulf running down to Athens, while to the west the lovely Gulf of Corinth ran out to the Adriatic Sea and toward Italy itself, and to the north rose the beautiful mountains on the blue haze across the gulf.

On the Sabbath, Paul and his friends went down the

busy streets—for Corinth had no rest-day—and into the meeting-house, passing under the lintel on which "Synagogue of the Hebrews" was carved in Greek.[1] Paul would be received with great respect by the elders and people, for he was a Rabbi who had graduated at Jerusalem at the feet of the great Gamaliel.

There was a stir, however, in the synagogue when this newcomer, with his swift speech and passionate words, told these people who waited for the Messiah, that already the Christ had been born and had died the death of a felon on a Roman cross and had been raised again. We are not told what he said to them, only that he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath. One thing we know, that he had made up his mind that the method he used at Athens was not the one for him to use here. For as he wrote to them:

"I did not come to you with clever speech or with wisdom. I made up my mind not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

The Jews in the synagogue muttered uneasily at this man who dared to say that a man who was nailed to a Roman gallows could ever be the Son of God.

About that time two men—a young Greek (who, however, had a Jewish tinge in his hair and face) and an older bearded man came walking into Corinth. Paul's eyes lighted with joy as he saw them. They were his comrades, Silas and Timothy, who had hurried down from Macedonia (Timothy from Thes-

[1] A fragment of the door-lintel of the ancient synagogue of Græco-Roman times has recently been discovered, and is preserved in the Museum at Corinth.

salonica and Silas from Berœa) to Athens and had followed him on to Corinth. Paul simply overflowed with joy when he heard that persecution utterly failed to shake the courage of the Christians in Thessalonica, and he sat down at once and dictated a letter to them. Timothy would sit with a long scroll of papyrus unrolled, writing down in Greek letters. This is a part of what he wrote:

"When Timothy came just now from you to us and brought us glad news of your faith and love, and that you have good remembrance of us all the time, wishing as greatly to see us as we desire to see you, then brothers, we were made happy over you . . . for now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord. How *can* we express our thanks to God again for you, for all the joy that makes us glad for your sakes before our God? . . . Love one another. Study to be quiet. Do your own business and work with your own hands. . . . Do not do evil for evil to any man."

Paul now seemed aflame as never before with the Good News that he had to tell to Corinth. Like a mountain torrent in full spate his words would not wait, nor could he brook delay. He stood before the synagogue and cried to them with arms outstretched:

"We come as ambassadors for Christ, as though God sent us to win you to Him. . . . We come showing ourselves to be His Ministers—patiently, in suffering, in poverty, in distresses, beaten, imprisoned and mobbed; labouring, watching, going hungry; by pureness, by knowledge, by the Holy Spirit; by love without fraud; by the armour of justness on the right

arm and on the left . . . men sorrowful yet always full of joy; poor and yet making many others rich, having nothing and yet possessing everything."

He looked round on them. The chief man in the synagogue, Crispus, was looking at him with eyes glowing as though all the world had become new. But others stood up and with angry voices asked how long they must listen to this blasphemous fellow who declared a mere peasant criminal was the Son of God. Paul's blood was up. He had given them their chance of knowing the truth. They refused. And in his mind there came the picture of the Corinth outside the synagogue—out there under the winter sky of Greece—the Corinth with its theatres and stadium, its temples and markets, its wild and wanton evil.

> "Then with a rush the intolerable craving
> Shivers throughout me like a trumpet-call,—
> Oh to save these! to perish for their saving,
> Die for their life, be offered for them all!" [1]

Paul rose, and loosening his robe he took its skirt in both hands and shook it at them as though he shook the dust of the place from him, and with passion in his voice he cried:

"Your blood be upon your own heads. I am clean: from this hour onward I go to the peoples."

The contemptuous shaking out of his tunic infuriated the Jews, who ground their teeth on him as he went out of the synagogue, never to return. Close by the synagogue lived a man named Titius Justus, a Roman who had become a fellow-worshipper with the

[1] F. W. H. Myers, "St. Paul."

Jews, but now shared Paul's faith. Justus and Paul, being both Roman citizens, would have a fellow feeling. So when Crispus, the chief man of the synagogue, came out with Paul, they went into Justus' house next door. Here Paul gathered those who wished to hear him; and many of the Corinthians who would never have appeared inside a synagogue came to listen and believed on Jesus Christ.

Yet Paul, as he thought of the anger his protest must have provoked, wondered if it would not be better to remain quiet for a little, for he now knew that the Jews would be sure to set up a ferment against him, as they had done in Lystra, Philippi, Thessalonica and indeed all along his path. When Paul lay on his mat-bed, wondering what would happen next to him, there came a vision in his sleep. These words came to him, in a vision, as from Jesus Christ to himself:

"Do not be afraid: speak on. Do not hold your peace. I am with you. No man shall hurt you. For I have many people in this city."

So Paul boldly went on with his speaking. We know some of the words that he said, for he wrote afterward in one of his letters to the Christians at Corinth:

"If ye keep in memory what I preached to you . . . first and foremost that Christ died for our sins and was buried and rose again the third day, and was seen of Peter and then of the Twelve. . . . And last of all he was seen by me also. . . .

"Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore my loved

brothers, stand, stand fast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

"You know (you men in this city that is full of temples to the gods) that you yourselves are the Temple of God. The Spirit of God lives in you, as in a temple. If any man makes God's temple unclean, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, which temple you yourselves are."

So he taught them that they must keep their lives as a spotless temple, in that city which was so filthy in its life that even in the Roman Empire of that day to be called a "Corinthian" was to be called a man of dishonourable name.

"Do you not know," he said to these men who had from the time they were boys been familiar with the Isthmian games, "that they which run in a race all run, but one wins the prize? So run, that you may be victors. And every man entering for an athletic contest goes into thorough training. Now they do this to win a wreath that will wither; but we for a wreath that cannot fade. I therefore run, not as a man who does not know the goal; I box not like a man beating the air. No! I buffet my body to be master of it."

The more vigorously Paul spoke to the people of Corinth and the greater the number of men and women who came to him, the more furious did the Jews become. But they seemed to be unable to do anything. They would—like the Jews in Philippi—have trumped up some evidence that Paul was teaching people to break the Roman law; but probably the governor of Corinth—which was capital of all Achaia (i.e. South Greece)—was friendly to Paul and per-

haps knew (it may be through Justus) that Paul was a loyal free-born Roman citizen.

At last this governor was recalled to Rome and a new proconsul was appointed—Gallio, the brother of that famous author Seneca, who became private tutor to young Nero. The Jews made up their mind to try now, once and for all, to get Paul stopped in his work.

The proconsul sat at certain hours on his ivory *sedile* of office on the marble dais of justice for any to bring their case before him. So the Jews seized Paul and drew him along to the Tribunal.

Gallio looked up as the rabble of Jews came crowding in breathlessly.

"What is it?" he asked.

"This fellow," said their leader (probably Sosthenes, the new chief man of the Jewish synagogue) pointing to Paul, "is persuading men to worship God contrary to the law."

Swiftly Paul stepped forward ready to speak, when Gallio with lifted hand called for silence and said:

"You Jews, there would be some sense in my entertaining your charge if it were a matter of breaking the Roman law; but if this is a mere question of debate and words between you and only concerns your Jewish law, look to it yourselves. I will be no judge of things that do not concern me. Go away!"

Gallio signalled to his lictors to drive the crowd of Jews back, and they began to hustle them away. The circle of Greeks who had been watching on the fringe of the crowd and who had no love to spare for

the Jews, no sooner saw the turn events had taken than they set on the Jews, and gripping hold of Sosthenes, their leader, they thwacked him with staves, right in front of Gallio. But Gallio passed to the next case and did not lift a finger to protect Sosthenes.

XXV

"LONE ON THE LAND, AND HOMELESS ON THE WATER"

PAUL lived on in Corinth for many days after Gallio had driven the Jews from his judgment-seat.

He worked there through all the blazing summer when the hills beyond the gulf shimmered in a blue haze. He saw the men and women go out to gather the grapes from the vineyards on the hillside, to reap the yellow harvest of the plain, and to garner the olives and citrons from the groves of the Isthmus. He stayed on through the winter, when the snow-covered mountains of Hellas were outlined in white against the grey sky, till spring came again and all the plain was gleaming with yellow, red and blue anemones, and the black oxen dragged the wooden ploughs through the brown soil to break it up for the sowing.

Through all that time, the more he thought about Gallio's judgment that he, Paul, the Jew and Roman citizen, had the right to preach as he would and where he would in the Roman Empire, the greater seemed the meaning of the decision. For it meant that, so long as he did not teach men to rebel against the power of the Emperor Claudius, Paul could carry his adventure into Rome itself. Priscilla, whose name suggests that she was a Roman lady of high standing,

and Aquila, her Jewish husband, would fill Paul's mind with their remembrances of the greatness of Rome, the queen of cities, the mistress of the world, set upon her seven hills by the yellow Tiber. The thought of Rome never left Paul's mind from that time onward.

Paul had now drawn together in Corinth men and women, with their sons and daughters, into a "house-church." Among his friends who worshipped together with him were Titius Justus the Roman and Crispus, Erastus, a great man who was treasurer of the city of Corinth, and Achaicus, Fortunatus, Gaius and Chloe with her household. It may even be that Sosthenes, who had been his enemy in dragging him before Gallio, the new leader of the synagogue, had joined him: for a few years later, at the beginning of his first letter to the Christians at Corinth, Paul says that a Sosthenes from Corinth was actually with him when he wrote it. Paul now felt that, having "as a wise master-builder" laid firm foundations at Corinth, he must go forward with his work in other places.

When the spring-time came, and even before the ships hoisted their brown sails and had begun to cross the Great Sea, Paul bestirred himself to go back to Antioch in Syria, the place that had first sent him out on his journeys. But he went back by a route on which he had never travelled before and he started with new companions.

Aquila and Priscilla decided to cross with him over the Ægean Sea to Ephesus. To these Roman travellers this did not seem (as it does to us) like sailing from Europe to Asia; for Ephesus was almost as

Greek as Corinth, and it seemed nearer to Athens than did many inland cities among the hills of Greece itself. All the shores and islands of the Ægean were one to the Greek. All the harbours of Greece, except one, look out over the Ægean Sea, so that really Troas, Ephesus and Smyrna were like cousins to Athens and Philippi and Thessalonica.[1]

Paul, with Aquila and Priscilla, having said a long "good-bye" in Justus' house, gathered their goods and set off down the road under the shadow of the Acro-Corinth hill to Cenchreæ. Paul's luggage was always light—his cloak and staff, his wallet for food, and perhaps a few rolls of manuscript tucked into his tunic. Aquila and Priscilla would have their tools, and some rolls of goat's-hair and camel-hair canvas and rope for tent-making.

They would stay a night at the house of Phœbe at Cenchreæ, for Paul says that she often tended him. Taking their passage next dawn on a sailing ship for Ephesus, they saw the hills of Greece slip past them, and the boat nosed her way out past the island of Salamis toward the open sea. With no compass to steer by and sailing in a sea of rocky islands, and especially so early in the spring,[2] the ship would be bound to look for anchorage under the lee of an island before sundown each day, and hoist sail at dawn to make the most of each day's light. So for day after

[1] See map at end.

[2] Paul apparently reached Jerusalem by the Passover which in the year 53 fell on March 22. The Mediterranean sea-traffic did not usually begin till March 5 because of the storms. There would, no doubt, be early pilgrim ships to take the Jews from all parts of the empire to Jerusalem.

day they sailed, till about the sixth day they would sight the island of Samos, and in an hour or so, with sails furled and sweeps out, were threading the winding channel of the River Caistor and the canal toward the harbour of Ephesus. Swinging round under the lee of the fortified hill that guarded the port, they found themselves in a land-locked harbour busy with all the life of spring.

Paul went ashore, and from the stone pier walked up the portway that ran, straight as a dart, between its marble pillars from the harbour to the heart of the city. There the theatre of Ephesus, cut out of the mountain-side, and the busy market-place faced him. As he went round by the theatre, through the Magnesian gate, he saw on the plain within groves of trees that seventh wonder of the world, the Temple of Artemis of the Ephesians,[1] rising all one glory of golden carving and white marble, with cool shadows where the worshippers went in under the great roof to lay their gifts on the altars.

Turning back he went with Priscilla and Aquila to the quarter of the city where the Jews lived. On the Sabbath he walked with them to a building where no images of gods could be found—where, indeed, the only carving was of a bunch of grapes and vine-leaves over the entrance. He entered the cool darkness of the synagogue and spoke with the people, as he was wont to do, of the coming, at long last, of the promised Prince, the Messiah. They leaned forward as he spoke and drank in his words eagerly. His Good News seems too wonderful to be true; if what

[1] Diana as the Romans called her.

Paul said was true, all ought to hear it: if false, his mouth ought to be stopped. They wished to know more.

"Stay with us and tell us more," they pleaded.

"No," replied Paul, "I must hasten to the Feast at Jerusalem. I will come again to you, if God wills."

The pilgrim ships were now hasting on their voyages from all parts of the Great Sea to Cæsarea, which was used as a port for travellers to and from Jerusalem. So Paul went down the portway again to the harbour, and saying "farewell" to Aquila and Priscilla and to his new-found friends in Ephesus, he went aboard a ship which swept down to the open sea for the long sail of over six hundred miles.

In those times, without the mariner's compass, sea-captains did not like to lose sight of land, and especially in those early spring days in the Ægean Sea when storms might leap upon them from the north and the clouds would hide the sun. So the ship in which Paul sailed would hug the coast, leaving Patmos to starboard, running past Miletus and through the strait between Cos and the gulf where Halicarnassus lay. They would surely run into the great harbour at Rhodes and then come past the mountains of Lycia, and, taking courage in both hands, sail south-east past Paphos in Cyprus whence Paul had sailed with Barnabas those years gone by.

The ship's deck was crowded with pilgrims with their rolled-up mat-beds, their staves and cloaks, their water-bottles and wallets stuffed with raisins and cheese and flat bread. Old men were there taking

their last long journey to the city on its hills, and boys who would remind Paul of the day when he had started with his father on his first pilgrimage to Jerusalem. At last the towers of Cæsarea and the sturdy sickle-shaped breakwater hove in sight. The great sail was furled and the sweeps put out to row the ship into harbour.

Once ashore Paul lost no time in joining the throngs of pilgrims who strode out past the stadium and theatre of Cæsarea, and up the Roman road which breasted the low hills and climbed the Judæan heights. Then the golden pinnacles of the temple broke the skyline. Paul's sandals again trod the pavements of the city where he had trained, at the feet of Gamaliel, that marvellous brain which now had proclaimed the Good News of the risen Christ in a score of cities from Antioch to Corinth, across a thousand miles of the Roman Empire.

Paul joined with his friends in the Passover Feast; but the narrowness of the Christian Brethren in Jerusalem jarred terribly on his spirit. Even now they could not all see that Christ had come with a message for all men and all nations, a salvation that broke through the myriad details of the law to that flaming higher law of love which was freedom indeed.

Paul turned his back on Jerusalem and sped northward to Antioch—probably by sea from Cæsarea to Seleucia. It must have refreshed him to meet again at Antioch the old friends who had sent him out to run his great adventurous course across the seas and in the cities of the Roman Empire. They too

would sit around him—Black Simeon, Lucius from Cyrene, Manaen and the others—with eyes shining with alternate joy and sadness as he told the great story of his adventures and those of Silas and Timothy.

How they listened to the varied tale of the call to Macedonia, the beating and the prison in Philippi, and then the earthquake and the coming of the Roman prætors to take them by the hand and beg them to leave; the long tramp over the Egnatian Way (with the riot in Thessalonica, and the threatenings at Berœa); the sailing to Athens where the learned philosophers jeered, though Dionysius and Damaris stayed to listen and to worship, and then the great days in Corinth. Surely the Antiochean Brethren could not help smiling as they heard how Sosthenes, who had dragged Paul before Gallio, was himself beaten by the people; yet they would love still more to hear Paul say that Sosthenes himself had, after all, entered the Way of Salvation.

The Mother-church at Antioch had sent Paul out on two great missionary journeys, each stranger and more wonderful than they had imagined in their wildest dreams. There had been built, through the splendid quest of Paul and his companions, outposts of the Faith, churches garrisoned by brave Christians who held the line in the great strategic centres halfway across the Roman Empire. From Antioch the line now stretched across the Syrian mountains of Amanus, over the Cilician plain and through the Cilician gates to the cities beyond Taurus—Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, Antioch-in-Pisidia—down to Ephesus, and across

the Hellespont to Philippi, Thessalonica, Berœa, and even to Athens and Corinth.[1]

The hearts of the friends of Paul at Antioch would burn within them as they listened to the story and looked into the brown face of their dauntless pioneer. He would be sure to share with them his plans for the future. Of these we know that he had two on which his heart was at this time specially set.

He was afraid that the churches in cities across the Empire might grow narrow and be simply interested in their own little affairs. So his first plan was to give them a work to do for other people far away from themselves. He meant to set them all to collect money for the help of the poor who were in Jerusalem. This would do great good to the churches who gave the money—by widening their outlook—giving them a more imperial vision, and the feeling that they belonged to a great Church which embraced all who held the Faith in the unity of the Spirit. It would also greatly stir the hearts of the people in Jerusalem, who were in danger of feeling that the far-off churches were hardly truly Christian, to receive a gift from those in "the far-flung battle-line" of Paul's missionary adventure. That was the first plan in the far-seeing brain of Paul, who was a statesman, "a wise master-builder," as well as an heroic pioneer.

Another great ambition of Paul at this time, one that he knew might cost him his life—as, indeed, it did—was to carry his Gospel into the very heart of

[1] The wonder of this achievement becomes clearer and stronger as the line of the growth is traced on the map. See at end.

the Roman Empire, that is, to occupy the very centre of the world of his day—Rome. To bring into being a Church that felt itself to be one throughout the whole Empire and with a centre at the capital of the Empire itself—that was the daring, the tremendous scheme of the wise and undaunted master-builder.

It was now summer. Paul wished to carry out part of his first plan before winter set in, and at the same time to fulfill his promise to his friends at Ephesus. He, therefore, left Antioch and went out once more across the Orontes, with his feet on the open road and his face toward the mountain heights. Simeon and some of the others would be sure to go out the first miles of the road with him. But, as the men of Antioch waved their "farewells" to Paul and took their last look at the sturdy figure as he rode his ass along the paved way, they would not know that they would never look on him again.

From dawn to dark he rode, leaving the great Mount Sulpius behind him, passing now the shore of a lovely lake and there a stream running down from the Amanus mountains. He would talk by the wayside with the leaders of the camel-caravans that swung along the great road up the now deepening gorges of the mountains and through the dark shadows of the Syrian Gates—the pass that led into his own native Cilician plain.

Along the great road—it was the ancient road down which Alexander the Great himself had come with his armies—Paul travelled till he rode across

that bridge from which as a boy he had watched the boats go down to the harbour of Tarsus. Here, and among the other churches of the plains, he spoke to the Christian folk, strengthening their courage and helping them to meet the arguments of their enemies. He went along the old streets down which he had run as a boy to school, and would see the booth where he had sat at the loom and had thrust his first needles through the goat's-hair tent canvas.

Then Paul turned his back on Tarsus and went out northward across the plain to the Taurus mountains. As the traveller rested the ass at the foot-hills and gazed back down the road to the roofs and orchards of Tarsus, and saw the silver ribbon of the river curving down to the harbour, he took his last look at that "no mean city," whose chief glory after all is not that Alexander the Great bathed in its river, or that Antony entertained Cleopatra in its palace, or that Athenodorus taught in its university, but that Paul himself was born within its walls.

So Paul passed for ever from that plain up the Cilician Pass, where the tinkle of the camel-bells and the music of the mountain stream filled the grey gorges. Paul climbed up and on by the Roman post-road till he passed through the shadow of the Cilician Gates, out on to the high tableland of Cappadocia. He came out on to the dry road on which the summer sun shimmered, and the very camels were glad to get out of the rays of the noonday under the shelter of a wayside inn.

He reached Derbe, going in by the gate through which some three years earlier he and Silas had

entered. Here—as everywhere on this journey—he told the Christian folk of the needs of the poor of the church in Jerusalem; and they promised their gifts. So he passed from Derbe at dawn, when the sun threw the long shadow of the mountain of black rock along the path that he was to follow up the low hills. Through the day he walked till he reached the bridge near which the oxen quenched their thirst at sunset in the shallow stream that ran over its bed round the Acro-Lystra.

At Lystra (we can well believe) grandmother Lois and her daughter Eunice would want to know all the adventures that had fallen to their boy Timothy. They would be proud to hear how he helped Paul—carrying his cloak, writing his letters and bearing them to far-off cities, facing the scourge and the rods, and the peril of sea and land for Paul's sake and for the Gospel. Starting from Lystra, perhaps before dawn, to get as much journeying as possible done before the midsummer sun was high in the heavens, Paul took the caravan road over the low ridge of hill country and down to where the gushing river from the mountain watered the orchards and cleansed the homes of Iconium. The orchard farmers of Iconium would be busy scaring the birds from the growing fruit, in the days when Paul cheered the church there with stories of the wonderful victories their Lord had won in the cities of East and West.

So he passed on his unresting travel; and, though the grey was now beginning to tinge Paul's beard and his hair, and the fiery sun made journeying a toil; and though friends desired him to stay and warned

him how the brigands of the Pisidian mountains lay in wait ahead, Paul never stayed his course. The fire of his passion for the Christ whom he had met on that blazing day on the road to Damascus, so many years ago, burned on him always.

> "Let no man think that sudden in a minute
> All is accomplished and the work is done;—
> Though with thine earliest dawn thou shouldst begin it
> Scarce were it ended in thy setting sun."

Paul could

> "Never at even, pillowed on a pleasure,
> Sleep with the wings of aspiration furled. . . ."

So with staff and water-bottle and mat-bed, and with his satchel stuffed with fruits and cheese and bread, he got out on to the road again, till he once more joined the new military Roman road that led him to Pisidian Antioch, where the aqueduct brought the water from the mountains in whose gorges the robbers hid.

Paul's friends there would remember how Barnabas and he had first come to them from the fever-stricken Pamphylian plain five years before, and they would be full of joy at seeing him now for the third (although it was the last) visit among them. We do not know what he said to them; but he would be likely to say things as he was leaving them, like those great words that he wrote to these Churches of Galatia later on.

"Brothers, you were called to be free; only, do not make your freedom an opening for the flesh, but serve one another in love. For the entire Law is

summed up in one word: 'You must love your neighbour as yourself'—whereas if you snap at each other and prey upon each other, take care in case you destroy one another.

"I mean, lead the life of the Spirit; then you will never satisfy the passions of the flesh. . . . The harvest of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, good-temper, kindliness, generosity, fidelity, gentleness, self-control.

"Make no mistake . . . A man will reap just what he sows; he who sows for his flesh will reap destruction from the flesh, and he who sows for the Spirit will reap life eternal from the Spirit.

"Never let us grow tired of doing what is right; for if we do not faint we shall reap our harvest at the proper season."

Paul's friends would go with him through the western gate with the dawn at their backs, as he set out on the last great part (and in some ways the most dangerous part) of this journey. At the beginning his road lay on the track that Timothy and Silas had trodden with him three years earlier.[1]

He was on the great Roman road. Down from the north-east and across this Roman road came the trade road along which the camels brought the fruits and silks of the plateau to Ephesus or the Ægean coast. Paul was going to Ephesus, but he did not take this safer caravan route with its regular inns and companionship. He struck ahead on the hillier and more dangerous road, where fewer men went,

[1] See chapter xviii.

and he travelled straight for Ephesus. Up and down the hills and dales of Asia he passed, gradually dropping from the tableland to the river valleys, crossing the streams that ran from the hills to the Meander River, then over the moorland to the upper waters of the Caistor.

Down the valleys of the Caistor from highland to lowland he rode, only drawing bridle for needed rest and shelter at noontide and at night. For the autumn was drawing on, the vineyards were purple with grapes and the olives hung thick on the trees; the cries of the harvesters sounded on the hillsides, and the laughter of the maidens as they trod the grapes with their bare feet in the wine-press.

At last one day, as Paul came round a curve in a valley, he felt a fresh breeze on his cheek and saw a blue gleam on the horizon. The word of the soldiers of Greece when they saw the Euxine would leap to his lips: "Thalassa, thalassa—the sea, the sea!"

Before him like a map unrolled lay the mouth of the Caistor, the shining marble temples and theatre and stadium of Ephesus, and on the edge the harbour with its still masts and crowded shipping.

Only that very spring he had sailed from that harbour out into the Great Sea, and had braved the storms of March to worship at Jerusalem at the Feast. He had gone over mountain pass and plain and plateau, had seen a thousand faces lighten at his coming, and had quickened to new courage hearts that were failing in facing hard tasks.

Now he had to face the battle afresh in this new City; but he did not quail or tire.

> "Yes, without cheer of mother or of daughter,
> Yes, without stay of father or of son;
> Lone on the land and homeless on the water,
> Pass I in patience till the work is done."

His pace would quicken, and as he entered the great Smyrna gate of Ephesus he would look eagerly for the familiar faces of Aquila and Priscilla.

XXVI

THE DEFIANCE OF ARTEMIS

PAUL, when he had passed through the gateway in those great walls, four miles long, which surrounded Ephesus, and entered the busy streets, would hasten to the house where his old Corinthian friends, Priscilla and Aquila, were living. After telling them the adventures that had fallen to him by sea and land during his six months' journey, he would listen to all the story of the work in Ephesus in his absence.

"There came to us from Egypt," they would say, "from the city of Alexandria, a Jew named Apollos. He was one who believed all that John the Baptist preached on Jordan, and he had learned about Jesus and His message of the Kingdom of God. This he preached here in Ephesus. He is a man of power and of deep scholarship, and he spoke in the synagogue most vehemently, explaining to the people the Way of Jesus. We brought him here to our house and explained to him more clearly what the Way of God means."

Alexandria, on the north-east coast of Africa, was the greatest place of learning for the more liberal-minded Jews in Paul's day. Paul was very glad to have a powerful orator with an educated mind, like Apollos, to help in the work.

"But where is Apollos now?" he would ask.

"He desired to go over to Greece; so the Brothers here wrote a letter to the Christians in Corinth telling them to welcome Apollos and make him feel at home among them. So he has sailed across there and is helping them splendidly. He is publicly contesting with the Jews with might and main, showing them from our scriptures that Jesus is truly the Messiah."

Paul immediately set to work to follow up the work that Aquila and Apollos had done in Ephesus. He went straight to the synagogue. There he spoke out fearlessly, explaining how Jesus had come to bring in the Reign of God in the world. Many of the men who squatted there, fingering their beards as they listened to his glowing words, and many of the women, who sat hidden behind the screen yet were all ears to these startling new things, believed that what Paul said was true. They became disciples of the Christian Way. But others disagreed and grew more and more stubborn in their views. They began to raise their voices in argument against Paul and said everything that they could against Paul's teaching.

Paul made an agreement to hire a hall named, after its past or present owner, Tyrannus. So, withdrawing his disciples from the synagogue, he used to teach them and all who cared to hear in the school of Tyrannus, probably during the afternoons. The business life of the cities of the East ended by middleday, so that handicraftsmen and officials, lawyers or shopkeepers, were free to attend. Timothy, Titus, and Priscilla and Aquila would also be there listening and taking down notes.

The work of Paul in the quiet of that room is less thrilling to us than his adventures in prison at Philippi or before Gallio in Corinth. Yet that work was one of the most fruitful and far-sighted of all his acts.

As Paul sat there on the summer afternoons at Ephesus, in the lecture-room with his disciples grouped round him, listening and taking notes, the eyes of his mind were gazing far beyond them. He saw all that province of Asia, of which Ephesus was the glittering and splendid capital, like the palm of a hand of which the valley in which Ephesus lay was the wrist and the rivers were the fingers. There ran the fingers of the Lycus, the Meander, the Caistor, the Hermus, and their tributaries; and on them the busy trading cities of Laodicea, Colossæ, Philadelphia, Hierapolis, Smyrna, Sardis and Thyatira, covering Asia, the richest province in the Roman Empire—which it was now Paul's daring plan to capture for his Lord.

No wonder that he wrote from Ephesus to his friends in Corinth, "I have wide opportunities here for active service." He looked over that province like a General Officer Commanding, planning to win it for his King. The disciples who sat with him learning were the officers whom Paul was training. He planned to capture that fair province from Tyrannus' lecture-room. And he succeeded.

Timothy, Tychicus, Epaphras, and other men went out from that room and from the presence of Paul up those river valleys, aflame with enthusiasm and strong with his courage. In synagogue and market-place, in all those cities, they declared to Jew and Greek, Roman and Asian, scholar and merchant, scribe

and soldier, gymnast and gladiator "the unsearchable riches" of Him whom Paul had brought to them. Thus it was, doubtless, that the Gospel reached Colossæ and Laodicea (Col. ii. 1) and other cities in the Roman province of Asia, where the churches had not seen Paul's face even to the time when he wrote to them from Rome the "open letter" we know as "Ephesians." [1] So wonderfully did Paul's splendid and daring strategy succeed, in working from that room, the school of Tyrannus, that Luke was able to write:—

"Paul carried on his discussions and teaching every day"—perhaps from eleven to four, as a later note added to some local copy of Acts has it—"in the lecture-room of Tyrannus. This went on for two years, so that all the inhabitants of Asia heard the word of the Lord."

There were mysterious people among those whom Paul taught, magicians, wonder-workers, hypnotists. Some had rolls of parchment and papyrus with strange drawings and signs, like the Bear, the Ram, the Heavenly Twins, the Goat. They would ask your birthday and work out the star under which you were born and then declare whether you would be shipwrecked or become a great general. They would make you gaze in a crystal ball to see things happening far away. They would make an image in wax in the shape of your enemy and then burn it or stick pins into its heart as a magic way of killing him. They

[1] See Col. ii. 1 and iv. 16.

would mutter spells to cast out demons and mix magic potions or burn charms in mystic fires.

There were more of these magicians in Ephesus than anywhere in the world. Some were cheats and charlatans, others believed sincerely in the power of their charms. All as they came under the higher spell of the power of Christ, under Paul's teaching, would come to him and confess to him the magic spells that they used and say that they were going to give them up. At last there were so many who used to practise magic arts and had now decided to be Christians, that all brought together the parchment rolls on which their spells and star-readings were written. Placing them in a great pile they set them in a blaze and made a great bonfire of them. They reckoned up that day that two thousand pounds' worth of books were burned.

The crowds of people who stood around with wondering eyes as the flames leaped up—even those who before had not really listened to Paul's preaching—felt awestruck by the power of his work.

One day some men sailed across the Ægean from Cenchreæ and landed at the harbour at Ephesus. Coming up the portway into the city they inquired where Paul lived. When they found him, he was very glad to see them, for they were from the home of Chlœ in Corinth, and he looked forward to having news of how his beloved people there were doing.

His face, however, became very grave and a little stern when he heard that the Christians in Corinth had been quarrelling among themselves, and had also fallen into just those horrible sins of unclean living that

made the name of Corinth a byword all over the Roman Empire. On the second of these matters he had already heard from Corinth before, and had replied at once in a letter which has not survived.[1] Now he sat down and dictated a second and longer letter to them. He spoke the words, and they were written on the long roll of parchment, perhaps by Sosthenes or Titus or even Luke. We can imagine how, when these words were read out to the people gathered together at Corinth, their faces would flush with shame as he upbraided them for their quarrelling and foul living, and then glow with joy as he showed them the true ideal for their lives.

"Brothers," he wrote, "I beg of you, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, to drop these party-cries. There must be no cliques among you; you must regain your common temper and attitude. For Chloe's people inform me that you are quarrelling. By 'quarrelling' I mean that each of you has his party-cry, 'I belong to Paul,' 'and I to Apollos,' 'and I to Cephas (Peter),' 'and I to Christ.' Has Christ been parcelled out? Was it Paul who was crucified for you?

"With jealousy and quarrels in your midst, are ye not behaving like ordinary men? When one cries 'I belong to Paul,' and another 'I belong to Apollos,' what are you but men of the world? Who is Apollos? Who is Paul? They are simply used by God to carry His Gospel, each as the Lord assigns his task.

"I did the planting, Apollos did the watering, but

[1] 1 Cor. v. 9.

it was God who made the seed grow. So neither planter nor waterer counts, but God alone Who makes the seed grow. We work together in God's service; you are God's crop from His seed, God's house being built up. . . .

"So you must not boast about men. For all belongs to you; Paul, Apollos, Cephas, the world, life, death, the present and the future—all belong to you; and you belong to Christ, and Christ to God."

Then, lest they should say that it was all very well for Paul to write so when he himself was at his ease, he explains to them that:

"To this very hour we hunger and thirst, we are ill-clad and knocked about, we are waifs, we work hard for our living; when reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we put up with it; when defamed, we try to conciliate. To this hour we are treated as scum of the earth, the very refuse of the world!"

Even apart from the fresh news as to the length to which party strife had gone in the Corinthian church, Paul was intending to answer its own questions, partly in reply to his recent letter and partly on other points, which had reached him by special messengers, possibly bearing them in writing (see xvi. 17 f.). The messengers may have included Sosthenes, a leader of the church at Corinth, whom Paul associates with himself as agreeing in the counsel given in his letter. He goes, then, carefully over the points they had raised, mingling profound instruction in Christian principles with his censures on their shortcomings. Incidentally, he shows them in one sentence

what will make them all feel one, not people who can be divided and think themselves better than each other. "By one Spirit we have all been baptized unto one Body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or freemen; we have all been saturated with one Spirit."

Many prided themselves on their special "spiritual gifts" (*charismata*), and used them in a selfish, egoistic way. Paul corrected this by the idea of a single body with its many different members—the eye, the hand, the foot—all working for the common good of that body as a whole. All its special functions are due to the same God, Who works in and through each and all its members. But there was a yet simpler and more direct way of appeal for self-forgetful co-operation instead of pride and competition for glory. Paul glowed with a new fire as he broke out into that wonderful Praise of Love which men will read and reread in all languages till speech perishes from the earth.

"Yet I will go on to show you a still higher path.
I may speak with the tongues of men and of angels,
but if I have no love,
I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal;
I may prophesy, fathom all mysteries and secret lore,
I may have such faith that I can move hills from
their places, but if I have no love,
I count for nothing;
I may distribute all I possess in charity,
I may give up my body to be burnt, but if I have
no love,
I make nothing of it.

"Love is very patient, very kind. Love knows no jealousy; love makes no parade, gives itself no airs, is never rude, never selfish, never irritated, never resentful; love is never glad when others go wrong, love is gladdened by goodness, always slow to expose, always eager to believe the best, always hopeful, always patient. . . . Thus faith and hope and love last on, these three, but the greatest of all is Love."

How the very being of those men and women at Corinth must have tingled as the bearer of this letter read out these words straight from their glorious author.

So Paul came toward the end of his great letter, and sent across the Ægean Sea from Ephesus to Corinth his ringing challenge and command.

"Watch, stand firm in the faith, play the man, be strong! Let all you do be done in love."

Paul bent over the letter and with his own hand penned its close. Then it was rolled and covered with an outer case to protect it from damage in travelling. The messenger—possibly his trusted Greek friend Titus—would thrust it into his tunic and go down the portway to the harbour, to carry across the water to Corinth words that will be read till the end of time.

In that letter Paul said that he hoped to start on a journey around the coasts of the Ægean Sea, visiting Philippi, and Thessalonica and Berœa, till he came to them in Corinth itself; but a great riot occurred which threw all his plans out and hastened his journey.

It came about thus. Each year as spring-time was changing to full summer, on a certain morning in

May,[1] the streets of Ephesus began to fill with crowds of holiday-making country people, who had come down on foot or by ass or camel from the river valleys of Asia. With them came merchants and shopkeepers, officials and students, from the cities of the Lycus and Meander and Caistor valleys, while the ships that crept into the port brought pilgrims from all along the coast and even from Greece and Macedonia across the Ægean Sea.

The whole country made holiday in honour of Artemis, the goddess of wild Nature, now partly Asian and partly Greek in character. The people crowded to see the chariots race round the stadium on the hill, drawn by horses frenzied by the cracking whips of the drivers and the shouts of the crowd. Wrestlers, their bodies glistening with oil in the blazing sun, and boxers with iron-studded gloves on their knuckles, strained and struggled. Men ran the foot races for the prize of a wreath. Hungry beasts—lions from Africa and tigers from the East—were let loose on the sanded arena of the stadium to fight with gladiators standing with their short swords drawn. In the theatre actors played comic plays of Aristophanes before the hill of faces that surrounded them, the audience which crowded the seats that rose tier above tier in the vast auditorium.

Paul heard the blare of trumpets and the clash and boom of cymbal and drum, and saw the multitude press out toward the Magnesian Gate of the City. The priests and priestesses of Artemis came in procession, with some slaves playing the music and others

[1] May 25 was the date of the festival of Artemis of Ephesus.

bearing aloft under canopies statues of the great goddess. As these passed by, the people waved their arms and gave a shout that surged to the very skies —"Great Artemis, Great Artemis of Ephesus."

Through the streets the goddess in symbol made her triumphal way to the theatre, where play was made in her honour. She came out again and was borne forward on the shoulders of men above the shouting crowds, toward the gate by Mount Coressus and back through the groves of green trees, above which could be seen the broad, ridged roof of the wonderful temple built for her worship.

As the procession drew nearer to the Artemision, the people saw a lovely white temple. Its wide roof and portico rested on row behind row of marble pillars, whose carved capitals were overlaid with gold and whose vast size was made graceful and light by their exquisite proportions. Climbing the marble steps that surrounded and raised the temple, the worshippers went barefoot out of the blaze of the sunshine, through the massive carven doors of cypress wood, into the cool dim quiet of the great hall of the temple with its many statues. Beyond which lay the inner holy place, with its roof of golden-cased cedar resting on priceless pillars of green jasper, its carven altar, its embroidered curtain behind which was concealed the goddess Artemis herself, who had fallen—they said—from heaven. She was never shown to the people—a dark, roughly carved image, with no beauty. Out in the city, however, Paul could see men were buying little graven or terra-cotta images of Artemis in her shrine, some to take back to their homes to worship, others to

present as a votive offering at the Artemision, the temple itself.

For four days the great festival of Artemis was celebrated each May-time; and then the crowds melted away, going back along a score of roads and across the sea. But all through the year in the booths in the market-place sat men who were moulding and carving and hammering. All were making the little shrines (*naoi*) of Artemis sitting in a niche, with her lions couched by her side. Here the sculptor carved the figures in pure marble from Mount Coressus. By his side a man with agile, clever fingers moulded them in clay that was put into the furnace and baked. Some of the finished terra-cotta shrines stood beside him. In the silversmiths' guild men sat by their tiny forges with little hammers and anvils on which they tapped the grey silver and moulded it to beautiful little images of Artemis. Many men in Ephesus made their living by these handicrafts and sold their shrines not only in Ephesus and on the feast day, but all up the Lycus, Caistor and Meander valleys at places like Sardis, Philadelphia, Pergamos and Thyatira, Hierapolis, Laodicea and Colossæ; for "all Asia" worshipped Artemis of Ephesus.

A leader among these silversmiths was named Demetrius. As he saw Paul, with his helpers Aquila and Timothy, and Erastus, Gaius and Aristarchus and others, spreading through Asia their new religion, which said that hand-made images of gods had no power and ought not to be worshipped, Demetrius saw that his income from the shrines would fall in proportion as Paul succeeded. He did not stop to

ask himself whether what Paul said was or was not true. He only saw that these new worshippers of the god whom they called Christ were growing in numbers and in power all over the city, and that men who had in the old days bought shrines of Artemis now bought them no longer.

Swiftly, one winter day, he drew the leading craftsmen together (the silversmiths, the sculptors in wood and marble and clay), perhaps in the guild of the silversmiths where he was a leading employer. When they were met together he stood up and spoke.

"My men," he said, "you know this trade is the source of our wealth. You also see and hear that not only at Ephesus, but almost all over Asia, this fellow Paul has drawn off a considerable number of people by his persuasions.

"He declares that hand-made gods are not gods at all. Now the danger is not only that we shall have our trade discredited, but that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will fall into contempt, and that she will be degraded from her majestic glory, she whom all Asia and the wide-world worship."

Demetrius by thus artfully playing both on their trade interest and their pride in Ephesus as the centre for Artemis worship, roused the meeting to fury against Paul. They poured out into the street shouting, in their passion of enthusiasm for Artemis and rage against the new Way.

"Great Artemis of Ephesus," they shouted as they crowded into the street.

The people leapt from their shops and houses. Sailors ran up the portway from the harbour; smiths

threw down their tools; boys left their games, to find out the cause of the uproar. They could only discover that the worship of their goddess was threatened, so they all joined in the cry. There was a shout of "To the theatre." The dust rose in the air above the many-coloured moving mob that pushed and jostled and yelled its way to the theatre, which was close by the market-place.

As the leaders headed the throng they caught sight of Gaius and Aristarchus of Macedonia, two of Paul's principal helpers, who had been busy spreading the Faith in Asia.

"There are two of the ringleaders," one would cry; "away with them."

They rushed at Gaius and Aristarchus and, dragging them by their arms and pushing them along, they surged down the street and crowded like a full-flowing tide into the theatre, clambering up the marble steps and over the seats, till the place was alive with faces of all nations—Romans, Greeks, Egyptians, Cretans, men of Asia, even Jews.

Paul heard the uproar and found that his friends Gaius and Aristarchus had been dragged into the theatre. Immediately he started to go to the theatre himself, to face the raging mob, regardless of the peril. Some of his disciples at once came round Paul and held him back. We can imagine their argument.

"Do not go. You are our leader. All the churches depend upon you, and you must keep yourself for the sake of us all. Besides that, what good would come if you went in among those raging beasts? The sight of you would only sting Demetrius and all his men to

a wilder fury, which the excitable mob of an Ionian coast city like this would wreak on Aristarchus and Gaius, as well as on you."

As Paul was hesitating, messengers came running to him from some of the Asiarchs—the great officials who were the High Priests for all Asia of the worship of the divine Majesty of Rome itself, in the persons of Emperor and the whole line of Cæsars. These great Roman-spirited officers were friends of Paul and did not wish any harm to come to him. Knowing that Paul never cared for his own safety and fearing that he would rush into the theatre and be torn to pieces, they sent to him saying:

"Do not imperil your life by coming into the amphitheatre."

Paul, at last, reluctantly gave way. In the theatre din and chaos ruled. Everyone was shouting: some yelling one thing, some another. The majority had no idea why they had met.

At last the Jews, fearing that the mob would turn against them as the class known to be opposed to all carving of graven images, pushed to the front Alexander, a leading Jew. He stood on the stage beckoning with his hand to get silence, so that he could defend himself against the cries of the people. For a few seconds there was quietness. Then the mob discovered that the speaker was a Jew, and a roar broke from them all, so that not a word that he said could be heard.

"Great Artemis of Ephesus," they shouted, turning a prayer into a rallying cry: "Great Artemis of Ephesus."

For two hours that cry echoed from the theatre across the city to the harbour. At last when they were exhausted, the secretary of state of Ephesus—the ruling official who was in close touch with the proconsul from Rome—stood up, and at last got complete silence.

"Men of Ephesus," he began with a touch of flattery that secured their hearing, "who on earth does not know that the city of Ephesus is warden of the temple of the great Artemis and of the statue that fell from heaven? All that is beyond question. So you should keep calm and do nothing reckless.

"Instead of that," he continued, pointing to Gaius and Aristarchus, "you have brought these men here who are guilty neither of sacrilege nor of blasphemy against our goddess. If Demetrius and his fellow-tradesmen have a grievance against anybody, let both parties state their case. The assizes are held, and there are such persons as proconsuls to give judgment. Any wider claim must be settled by the legal assembly of the citizens.

"Indeed," he concluded, "there is a danger of our being charged with a riot over to-day's meeting. There is not a single reason that we can give for this disorderly gathering. Now go your ways."

At this the people began to pour out from the theatre, arguing, laughing, angry and ashamed by turns. When the tumult in the city had quieted down, Paul called his disciples together round him. In the quietness he talked with them about the work that lay before them in Ephesus and other cities of Asia. He had been with them now for over two years, speak-

ing daily in the philosophy school called after Tyrannus, writing letters, sending his helpers out into the other cities: till now there were not only many churches among the cities, but there were men who could lead and carry forward the work that he had opened up.

He had intended to stay till that spring, and then to sail in the late spring at Pentecost,[1] going round by Philippi and Thessalonica to Corinth, as he had promised them in his letter. But the riot made his own work in Ephesus impossible for the time. Paul had never since his call from Tarsus stayed so long in one place as Ephesus. And in no place had the opportunity been so wonderful. But he felt the spirit of the pioneer stirring in him, the thrill that stung him on to run the full course, on to his goal.

It was winter,[2] with the mountains and hills above Ephesus etched in white snow against the dark sky, and away to the west the pearly sea of islands. The Great Sea was not open for journeying; but venturesome sailors could run the gauntlet of the storms in short voyages from port to port up the coast.

Paul, therefore, went down to the harbour and took passage in a coasting-vessel. She was rowed down river; then the sweeps were drawn in, and, with sail hoisted, she leapt out over the grey waste of waters with her bows northward.

[1] Our Whitsuntide.

[2] Probably January 56. Paul reached Ephesus October 53.

XXVII

THE FOILED PLOT

AS the ship clove her way northward through the wintry waves of the Ægean Sea, Paul's own heart was grey and stormy. The riot at Ephesus had broken his work for the time, work that was more to him than life.

As he looked back he could see that the more wonderful his success became, the hotter was the fury against him of those who stood for the old ways. Thrust out of Pisidian Antioch and Iconium, stoned in Lystra, beaten and imprisoned in Philippi, threatened with death in Thessalonica, scorned at Athens, dragged before the proconsul in Corinth, and now howled at by tens of thousands of Ephesians—Paul knew that he, like his Master, must expect death if he was to run the straight race in defiance of all. But on this Paul the dauntless had long made up his mind.

"I am ready," he said, "to be slain for Christ's sake."

He had shown also a score of times, in face of deadly peril, that what he said he was ready to do.

The ship at sunset swung round the jutting headland and sailed into the great harbour of Troas. The city behind looked from its hillside over the sea. Paul again saw the dawn come up over those immortal mountains which had looked down on the fights of

Achilles and Hector and all the heroes of the Trojan wars.

There in Troas he waited for a time with some of his friends who lived there. He had thought that there he might meet one of his closest comrades, Titus, the brave Greek who was on the way back from Corinth with the reply to a letter (our I Corinthians, or another) that Paul had written from Ephesus, and as to the effect of which he was in great anxiety. But to his disappointment Titus had not yet returned.

"At Troas," writes Paul, "I could not rest, because I found not Titus my brother; so I said 'Goodbye' and went off to Macedonia."

Going aboard another ship, Paul sailed north-west across the narrow seas past Samothrace Island, and once more made the harbour of Neapolis. As he looked up from the harbour toward the city of Philippi on the heights behind the Macedonian coast, he could not but remember the strange adventure of the rods, the prison, and the earthquake. We do not know what happened on this occasion when he reached Philippi; we only know that winter was still in his heart.

"When I reached Macedonia," he confided later to his friends in Corinth, "it was trouble at every turn, wrangling all round me, fears in my own mind."

Then there came to him a sight, and the sound of news, that wreathed his face with smiles and made his heart dance. He saw a figure coming toward him, his brave, buoyant comrade, Titus, with glad news from Corinth, that the people there had received his

letter in a good spirit, and had repented of their quarrels and their light thoughts about deeds of lust.

Titus told Paul how delighted he was with the Christians at Corinth, how they had received him with great respect, and did all the things that he told them. As Paul wrote to them later on in that same spring:

"I am, indeed, proud of you. You are a perfect comfort to me. I am overflowing with delight amid all the trouble I have to bear. . . . Titus gave me such a report of how you longed for me, how sorry you were, and how eagerly you took my part, that it filled me with joy. . . . I told Titus of my pride in you, and have not been put to shame; . . . I am glad to have full confidence in you."

But there was still a cloud on the sky which needed clearing away.

Some men there were who questioned Paul's authority to write to them, telling them how to behave and to live as Christians. They were largely egged on by certain interloping Judaizers from Judæa, who styled themselves "Apostles," and denied the title to Paul. "Who is this Paul after all?" they asked. Paul put forward in reply a claim that indeed must have made those "very eminent apostles" (as he calls them in irony) [1] wince, when they came to ask whether they had ever done anything that touched the dauntless courage of Paul. He asks are these critics of his really ministers of Christ, and replies:

"Yes, but not as much as I am, with all my labours, with all my lashes, with all my time in prison—a record longer far than theirs.

[1] 2 Cor. xii. 11 R. V. margin, cf. xi. 13.

"I have been often at the point of death. Five times have I got forty lashes (all but one) from the Jews. Three times have I been beaten by the Romans, once pelted with stones. Three times shipwrecked, adrift at sea for a whole night and day.

"I have been often on my travels. I have been in danger from rivers and robbers; in danger from Jews and Gentiles; through dangers of town and desert; through dangers on the sea, through dangers among false brothers; through labour and hardship; through many a sleepless night, through hunger and thirst, starving many a time, cold and ill-clad and all the rest of it."

Then Paul told how the Brethren at Philippi were getting together a gift for the poor at Jerusalem, and how he was asking Titus to return with this letter to Corinth and stir them up to do the same at once; for he wished a year hence to go on to Jerusalem with delegates from Achaia, Macedonia, Asia, and Galatia bearing the gift. This was what he had been aiming at ever since he had left Jerusalem, nearly three years before.

While Titus was hurrying back to Corinth, Paul spent the whole of that spring and summer first in Philippi, then going along the Roman road to Thessalonica, and in the autumn he reached Berœa. He was not alone now; for before Titus left, his own loved Timothy had joined him in time to share in the letter Titus was to carry back. Titus probably returned from there before Paul left Ephesus.

When winter came on Paul went southward from Berœa, and sailing up the Gulf past Piræus he landed

at the port of Cenchreæ and once more walked in the busy streets of Corinth.

During that winter spent in Corinth, the last of his mission work in Greece, Paul wrote the greatest of his Epistles, that to the as yet unvisited Church in Rome. Paul was proud to say, "I am a Roman citizen, free-born." Young Nero was on the throne of the Empire, but he had not yet shown himself to be the bloodthirsty, boasting, unnatural monster that he later became. Paul knew that it was the wonderful *Pax Romana* that gave him safe passage across the seas and along those Roman roads which linked the whole Empire together from Damascus to the Pillars of Hercules and from Tarsus even to London. It was more and more burning itself in on Paul's mind that "All roads lead to Rome."

"I must see Rome," he said. And, what is more, he had made up his mind to press on, beyond Rome, even into Spain. As Paul had sat through those mornings in Corinth and Ephesus, sewing and weaving to earn his own living, Aquila, at work alongside him, would talk of the greatness of Rome and of the men and women there who had already gathered together into a Christian Church. Some of them were friends of Paul, such as Epænetus, who had gone to Rome from Asia. There were in the Church at Rome his "kinsmen" in the flesh, probably fellow-Jews, Andronicus, Junias, and Herodion; and young men like Rufus, with dear old women like Rufus' mother—"his mother and mine," as Paul affectionately calls her.

Paul wished to help all those people in Rome to

glory in the greatness of their Faith and to forget, in one burning flame of love for Jesus Christ and for one another, everything that divided them.

Through more than one winter day, then, when even the waters of the narrow Gulf of Corinth were whipped to rage by the gales that tore down from the snow-covered heights to the North, Paul, in the house of his friend Gaius, dictated to young Tertius a long letter to the Romans. Tertius' reed-pen scratched and moved on the parchment as Paul, his eyes glowing with concentrated fire of brain and heart, spoke high and deep thoughts that make this letter not easy to understand when we first read it, yet thoughts that have made a difference to the world ever since. And, although the letter was so lofty, Paul took up many lines of writing at the end sending his greetings to his friends, each one by name. Probably his friend Phœbe of Cenchreæ carried this letter to Rome, where she now lived.

At last the long winter was over. The anemones began to spring through the brown earth and the swallows to come back from Egypt. The collection that had been made in the churches all around the Ægean Sea and up on the plateaux was being brought to one place, so that Paul and his friends could together carry the gift to Jerusalem. Paul had arranged to go by a pilgrim-ship to Jerusalem, picking up the others on the way so that they might arrive in time for the Feast.

One night, however, a friend came to Gaius's house with a startling rumour. The strict Jews, who had never forgiven Paul for going over from the Phari-

sees to the side of Christ and who saw in him the great enemy, had worked out a plot for killing him on the journey. They hoped, perhaps, on the Great Sea to have him stabbed in the night and his body dropped overboard.

Paul never flinched from danger; but death at that hour would ruin all his scheme for taking the gift to Jerusalem and going on thence to Rome. Swiftly he changed his plans. He arranged with his friends to meet them in Troas in the second week in April, *en route* for Jerusalem. He himself took journey through northern Greece. His enemies were foiled.

Paul celebrated the Passover with his friend Luke and a number of the others at Philippi. Then they got on board another ship at the port, Neapolis, in the following week. The winds were contrary, for it took five days to cross from Neapolis to Troas, a two days' run. There they met their friends with whom they were to sail for Jerusalem. The whole group of friends were made up (in addition to Paul their leader and Luke) of Sopater, the son of Pyrrhus, who had travelled from Berœa, and his Macedonian friend Aristarchus, representing Thessalonica; Gaius from Derbe with Timothy of Lystra, representing the churches up on the plateau of Galatia; while the province of Asia sent Tychicus and Trophimus.

Paul and his company stayed for a whole week at Troas. Paul having been prevented from reaching Jerusalem for the Passover, which he had now celebrated in Philippi, was determined to reach Jerusalem for Pentecost (our Whitsuntide). Pentecost fell that year (57) on May 28; and, as Passover

week began on April 7, it was April 19 when Paul reached Troas. He had just under six weeks in which to cover the journey down the Ægean Sea, across the Great Sea to Cæsarea and on foot to Jerusalem.

He found, as the week wore on at Troas, a ship that was taking a coasting journey with cargo down the coast of Asia and round past Rhodes to Patara, where he was sure to find a ship sailing eastward. The ship would not run into the Gulf of Ephesus, but would wait for some days at Miletus beyond the Gulf, to discharge and take up cargo. This would give Paul an opportunity for saying farewell to his close friends of Ephesus. He, therefore, decided to go aboard that ship.

Paul with his friends, on the last day of their stay in Troas, on the first day of the week, April 25, went together to a large house, three stories high. Going up by the stone stairs outside the house they opened the door of a large room at the top of the building where they could—undisturbed and uncrowded—hear the great leader, the fame of whose work and adventure in many lands and on the waters was known to them all.

The evening waned. As the swift darkness came on servants brought little lamps, and soon the flickering lights from many wicks cast soft lights and shadows over the thoughtful faces of those who listened while Paul spoke to them.

The stars came out. The night wore on. It was midnight. And still Paul, full of the glory and wonder of the story of God's power and love and holiness

shown in Jesus Christ, spoke on; and still the people —lost to all thought of time—listened.

A lad, Eutychus, sat on the window-sill, gazing long with reverence at the daring pioneer who stood there with glowing face and with hands gnarled with work, the hero of a hundred adventures in travel. But now midnight was past. Eutychus was very tired. He drowsed and nodded and then fell fast asleep. He drooped perilously in the window. Suddenly there was the sound of a cry and sickening thud. Eutychus had overbalanced; and had fallen headlong from the window three stories high. He lay on the ground in the dim starlight, horribly still and white. Paul and Luke rushed down. Luke, the physician, looked for breathing or heartbeat. He was sure that the young man was dead. The others gathered round, their faces and voices full of sorrow. Paul threw himself down and held the body close to the warmth and the breathing of his own body.

"Do not lament," he said, "the life is still in him."

Paul went upstairs again to the room where the Christians of Troas were waiting. Then, long before dawn, he broke bread and, with the others, ate it, and drank from the cup together in memory of their Lord. Paul had already two years before, when writing from Ephesus to the people at Corinth, said what was in his mind when he taught them in every place to join in this sacred meal.

"I passed on to you," he wrote, "what I received as from the Lord Himself, namely, that on the night He was betrayed the Lord Jesus took a loaf, and after

thanking God He broke it, saying, 'This means my body broken for you; do this in memory of me.'

"In the same way He took the cup after supper, saying:

"'This means the new covenant ratified by My blood; as often as you drink it, do it in memory of Me.'

"For as often as you eat this loaf and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He come."

Paul, when they had broken bread, continued his talk with his friends till the first faint light of dawn from beyond Mount Ida behind Troas dimmed the light of the lamps. By this time the lad, Eutychus, had recovered consciousness, though the shock still made it impossible for him to walk. But his friends were greatly relieved to be able to carry him home alive.

Meantime Luke, with Aristarchus and the others, had gone down to the harbour, and had before dawn gone aboard the ship, which was obliged to make an early start to take advantage of the morning breeze from the north. When the morning came they were already out on the sea with the bows of their ship rounding the cape on the way to Assos. So Paul, just as he was, not waiting for sleep or rest, went out on the road in the dawning light with resolute face, to join the ship of adventure which was to carry him where his enemies thronged.

XXVIII

"ONE WHO MARCHED BREAST FORWARD"

PAUL was tired with his strain of the long night's work and he hurried out so that he should not miss the ship at Assos.[1] If we may guess at his reason for wishing to go thither by land rather than by sea, it is most natural to suppose that he wanted the solitude of a long walk in which to face alone with his Master all the peril that, he knew, lay in ambush for him in Jerusalem.

So Paul footed it[2] out through the south gate of Troas and along the street through the suburb. He would pass the beautiful buildings where hot springs of healing water gushed from the earth into the marble baths, to which, in the afternoon, the dandies of the city would lounge and the slaves would carry the Roman ladies.

Soon Paul's feet were on the open paved road. With the sun rising above the green mountains on his left, and shining upon the plain, the headland, and the gleaming sea on his right, Paul travelled swiftly through the open country. He had gone twenty miles when the roofs of the town of Assos

[1] Perhaps it was on this visit that Paul left his winter cloak and his books in the care of Carpus (2 Tim. iv. 13), intending to pick them up on his way back to Rome.

[2] The literal meaning of the Greek πεξεύειν.

came in sight. Going straight to the port he found, sure enough, that his friends had already sailed into harbour. He went aboard the ship and by dawn of the next day she had cast off from the quay and was threading her way through the harbour shipping. Rounding the end of the stone pier she ran before the breeze all day, till at sundown she anchored in the port of Mitylene, behind the island of Lesbos. The harbour faced the rising sun, looking from the island across the narrow waters to the coast of Asia. By the time the light of morning had touched the hills of Lesbos, the sail was unfurled again, and the ship swept southward past the mouth of the gulf and by the dark mass of the island of Chios, which lay couched like a lion guarding the gate to Smyrna.

Paul was eager to go forward to Jerusalem, and his spirit may have chafed at the need to stop each night at ports so close to one another. Luke, however, a Greek living near the shore of the Ægean Sea, loved the ship and the sea, and revelled in her making a new harbour each night, for he tells us of each one as they reached it.

It was still April, the early summer of the Ægean Sea. The ship stopped each evening because the wind in the Ægean at that time of year generally blows from the north from before sunrise through the day—the cool air from the mountains rushing down across the seas to fill the place of the hot air that rises from the African desert. The breeze from the north dies away as the afternoon wears on, falling to a dead calm at sunset, after which a wind from the south blows gently through the night.

So again they cast anchor in the afternoon near Cape Argennum on the mainland opposite Chios. In the morning they were away before dawn across the entrance to the Gulf of Ephesus and swinging under the lee of Samos. They had not passed Cape Trogyllium when the wind fell again and the captain anchored his ship there, running early the next day across the gulf, between Samos and the mainland. The next morning they stood across the gulf and by noon the vessel was made fast alongside one of the wharves of Miletus, where she was swiftly boarded by the porters who started to unload her cargo, keeping up a sing-song chant as they went to and fro with jars of oil and wine and loads of grain and hides.

It would take some days for the unloading and to ship a new cargo. One of Paul's friends therefore started for Ephesus as swiftly as sail and beast could carry him. The messenger, taking advantage of the southerly breeze of the late afternoon, the *imbat,* could land at Priene, climb the hills on the following morning and drop again to the coast-road, reaching Ephesus by the following afternoon.

No sooner did the friends of Ephesus know that their great companion and hero was at Miletus than they were all agog to see him, and swiftly shod and girded themselves for the journey back with the messenger to see Paul. If they made good journeying they would reach him on the last day of April, and may have spent May 1 with him. They had not seen him since the great riot, when all Ephesus was filled with the shouting, "Great Artemis of Ephesus."

In a room they gathered round Paul waiting to hear

all that he would say, but most of all to see the loved face of the man. He talked to them. Luke sat quietly listening, perhaps writing a note quickly on a roll taken from his tunic, so that he should be able to tell the very words to the people who had never seen Paul.

"You know quite well," Paul said, "how I lived among you all the time ever since I set foot in Asia, how I served the Lord in all humility, with many a tear and many a trial which I encountered owing to the plots of the Jews."

The men would nod their heads in agreement. Then Paul continued.

"You know how I never shrank from letting you know anything for your good, or from teaching you alike in public and from house to house, bearing my testimony, both to Jews and Greeks, of repentance before God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Now here I go to Jerusalem under the binding force of the Spirit. What will befall me there I do not know. Only I know this, that in town after town the Holy Spirit testifies to me that bonds and troubles await me."

Their faces would be sad at this, but would glow with admiring hero-worship as they heard their leader say just what those who knew his fearless spirit would expect:

"But then, I set no value on my own life compared with the joy of finishing my course and carrying out the commission I received from the Lord Jesus, to attest the gospel of the grace of God.

"I know," he said amid a hush of awe, "I know

to-day that not one of you will ever see my face—not one of you among whom I moved as I preached the Reign. . . . I know that, when I am gone, fierce wolves will get in among you, and they will not spare the flock. . . . So be on the alert. Remember how for three whole years I never ceased night and day to watch over each one of you with tears. And now I entrust you to God. . . . He is able to build you up. . . ."

Their heads would nod agreement again as Paul went on to say, with his work-stained hands held out, "You know yourselves how these hands of mine provided everything for my own needs and for my companions. Silver, gold, or clothing I never coveted. I showed you how this was the way to work hard and care for the poor, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, Who said, 'To give is happier than to get.'"

With these words Paul fell on his knees and poured out prayer. As he ceased, their voices broke out in lamenting. They fell on Paul's neck and kissed him fondly, sorrowing chiefly because he told them that they would never see his face again.

They all went down to the harbour together. At last the captain of the ship gave the order to hoist sail. Paul tore himself away from his friends who, grown men as they were, could hardly see him through the mist of their tears as the ship gathered way and went out on the southward trail.

Away to starboard, in the light of the morning, lay Patmos screened by lesser islands. On the port side the coast faded away into a deep full gulf and then

shot out again in a wild riot of rock. The breeze drove the ship on till they sighted Cos Island to the starboard and ran in under her lee, before the wind had sunk to a calm or the *imbat* arisen to drive her back in her tracks.

In the morning they were away before the gleam of the sun had flushed to life the white columns of the temple behind the little harbour of Cos. Tacking east into the Gulf of Halicarnassus they swung west again round the southern cape, and threaded the channel among the islands till the great island Rhodes loomed ahead of them, her rolling hills and rich valleys covered with the spring green of olive trees and vines.

Long before Paul sailed into the deep safe harbour of Rhodes the mighty brazen Colossus, which had once straddled from pier to pier across the harbour, had crashed into the sea under the shock of earthquake. Yet eye and ear were filled with the sights and sounds of Rhodes; the glorious hills, the noble temples, the forest of masts, the cries of sailors speaking every tongue from Phœnicia to Spain, the hammering and sawing in the shipbuilding yards, the flitting of small boats across the harbour among the ships. And behind all, on the horizon to the north-west, lay the Lycian coast. From the sea the hills lifted themselves, rising past deep mysterious valleys to the high mountain ridge of the Taurus range, that caught the sun's first rays as Paul's ship, next day, sailed westward for Patara, the end of the ship's voyage.

As the vessel made fast alongside the wharves of Patara harbour in the afternoon, Paul saw behind the port the city of Xanthus breasting the foot-hills

of the Taurus. Paul and his friends had to change ships here, and may have gone up into the city through the gates into the colonnaded chariot-way flanked by foot-walks leading up to the theatre, and beyond that to the Temple of Apollo, the sun-god. But none of them would stay long, for time pressed and a large ship that could face the longer voyage across the Great Sea, away from coast and the ports, lay waiting to sail to the Phœnician harbour of Tyre.

Going aboard, they took passage on her, and next day were out on the Great Sea running south-east. Over the sea, like a dim cloud, came the distant coast of Cyprus. As it drew nearer Paul would be able to point out to Luke, as they stood on deck, the little harbour of Paphos, away over the port bow. Between those breakwaters Barnabas and he had sailed into these same seas ten years before.

The next afternoon they sighted the high bluff of Carmel glittering in the May sunshine, and the ship put in alongside the breakwater which made a wharf for Tyre, this island-city by the coast. There the ship was to unload her cargo. They had still a margin of time before Pentecost, so they went up the narrow streets of Tyre and searched for the Christian disciples who lived there.

For a whole week they stayed there, while Paul would speak with them in the cool dimness of some room away from the glare of the summer sun and the bustle and dust of the traffic.

"Do not go up to Jerusalem," said the friends at Tyre to Paul. They knew the peril that he ran. But he had set his face toward the city, with his friends

who—with their splendid gift—were the living evidence of the love which should bind all Christian folk together, whether they were Jews or Greeks or barbarians.

At last the ship was ready, the time was up and they set sail. The Christians in Tyre—women, boys, and girls, and all—came down the streets of the town to the beach. The porters, the sailors, and passing loungers would stare as this group of men and women and children knelt down, and one with a strong eager face poured out words of prayer. Then they said "Good-bye" to one another, and Paul, Luke, Aristarchus, and the others went aboard.

By noon the ship had covered the miles between Tyre and Ptolemais and had again made fast at the wharf in the sandy bay, where they all hurried ashore to greet the Brothers there, and then went aboard again for the last hours of sailing. Skirting the coast past Carmel, here hilly, there a confusion of sand-dunes, fringing the lovely plain of Sharon where the flowers were now shrivelling in the sun, they sighted the brave sickle-shaped breakwater that made the splendid artificial harbour of Cæsarea—dominated by the square, strong Roman citadel.

Paul had passed through Cæsarea again and again, so he could lead his friends straight to the house of his friend Philip, who welcomed them all gladly to his home. There they listened to all that Philip had to tell Paul of the happenings in the homeland; how Felix, the Roman governor, had paid assassins privately to slay the high priest, and had crucified many rebels on Olivet; how the Zealot Jews, with a burning

passion for the Jewish law were on the *qui vive,* and were ready to stab or stone any Jew who violated the holy Temple court by allowing the foot of a foreigner to tread its marble pavements.

"They plotted to kill me on the ship from Corinth," Paul would tell Philip. Then Paul would remember again that those Jews who were aflame with the lust for his blood had sailed on ahead of him and were now in Jerusalem waiting for him. In their minds too the old words which had once beaten like hammers in Paul's own Pharisee brain now rang like a command:

> "You shall not consent unto him,
> Nor listen to him;
> Neither shall your eye pity him,
> Neither shall you spare,
> Neither shall you conceal him:
> But you shall surely kill him . . .
> You shall stone him with stones that he die."

As they sat talking there came in a man from the hills whose eyes glowed with the look of one who saw strange tragic visions. He came among them, and, going up to Paul, took hold of the girdle of his mantle, and loosened it, and then took it in his own hands. Luke and Philip and Timothy and the others gazed at this man, whose name was Agabus, wondering what he would do.

Agabus stooped. Then twisting the girdle round his own feet and fastening it, he said, as he stood erect again:

"Here is the word of the Holy Spirit: 'So shall the Jews bind him who owns this girdle at Jerusalem, and hand him over to the Gentiles.'"

Paul was not startled. He had himself all along in this journey more and more come to believe that this would be. But it brought the peril home swiftly and with agony to his friends. How could they bear to see their hero-leader taken like a criminal, and perhaps beheaded! The horror of it gripped them. It filled Timothy, who had walked those hundreds of leagues by Paul's side over the plateaux and the mountains and had faced death with him on sea and land; Luke, who would willingly have died for Paul; and the others who owed all the glory and joy of their being to the new Life that Paul had brought to them.

"Do not, do not go up to Jerusalem!" they cried, and, men as they were, their eyes filled with tears. "Do not put your life in peril! Stay here."

Paul was touched to the quick. He could for a moment hardly control his own heart. Then with firm set face he spoke to them.

"What do you mean," he asked, "by weeping and unnerving me?" Then followed the dauntless words which would soon be put to the uttermost test.

"I am ready," he said, "not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ."

Nothing could daunt that great heart, nor could even the love of friends turn him aside. This his friends now saw. They agreed to his going to Jerusalem at whatever cost.

"The will of the Lord be done," they said.

XXIX

"AWAY WITH HIM"

THE clatter of horses' hoofs on the flagged street called Paul and his friends out at dawn for the canter across the rolling plain and the climb among the hills of Samaria and Judæa.

Guided by some of the friends from Cæsarea, they turned their faces to the rising sun and rode along the chariot-way, passing the inns from whose courtyards the grumbling camels were striding out, and skirting the empty stadium, till the short tunnel of the gateway in the city wall led them out to the freshness of the open country. Through the day they travelled, climbing the hills, resting in the blazing summer noonday; and at sundown they came to the home of an old man who with glowing face welcomed the great leader Paul, with his friends, to his house. The old man's name was Mnason. He had been a disciple of Christ for long years, and, like Barnabas, he was a native of Cyprus.

Next morning they said farewell to Mnason and breasted the hills again, till at last, as the shadows began to fall across the brook Kidron, they came out under the walls of Jerusalem. Paul found himself again in the city where he had dreamed dreams as a student. He forgot even the enemies who plotted

against his life, when he saw the faces of the Brothers in Jerusalem light with joy as he came among them. He would be glad, too, to see his nephew, the son of his sister, who lived in Jerusalem.

Going along the familiar streets on the following morning, Paul saw the Harvest Thanksgiving preparations, the little sheaves of corn, the huts of branches on the roof-tops recalling the old, old days when the Jews, wandering across the desert from Egypt, had neither harvest nor house. He entered the doorway of a house where in a large room the elders of the Church in Jerusalem had already come together, with the Lord's brother, James, presiding. Paul courteously saluted them. Then he began to tell much of the story that we have read in this book. Imagine the glory of hearing it at first hand from the man to whom these adventures had really come!

Quiet, conventional, stay-at-home men as they were, the elders were transported to a new world as they leaned forward with parted lips, chin on hand, listening to this flaming torch of a man, Paul, who had sped over sea and plain, through mountain pass and robber-valley; beaten and stoned and starved, slaving with his hands before dawn and declaring his glorious message till after midnight; singing in prison, rejoicing at the hard knocks of the world, the quickener of life in a score of cities and across half the known world;—the untiring Jewish traveller, the free, brave Roman citizen, the blazing Greek orator, the glad slave of Christ.

Then Timothy of Lystra and Gaius of Derbe

came forward with their gift from the Churches upon the plateau of Galatia; Tychicus and Trophimus of Ephesus with the gift from Asia; and Aristarchus and Secundus from Macedonia, with Sopater of Berœa, handed in their offering.

As Paul ceased speaking and the gifts were offered, the elders broke out into thanks.

"Glory be to God," they cried, "for these wonderful works through his servant Paul."

Then the glow of the wide vision faded, and Jerusalem was about them again and the Church in Jerusalem, still in many of its members trying to cramp Christ within the iron hoop of a single nation's destiny.

"Brother," they said to him, "you see how many thousands of believers there are among the Jews, all of them ardent upholders of the Law. Now they have heard that you teach all Jews who live among the Nations to break away from Moses and not to circumcise their children, nor to follow the old customs.

"What is to be done?" they went on. "They will be sure to hear you have arrived. So do as we tell you. We have four men here under a vow; associate yourself with them. Purify yourself with them. Pay their expenses, so that they may be free to have their heads shaved."

These men had taken the Nazarite vow that they would not shave their heads till they had performed certain acts and purified themselves.

"If you do that," said the elders to Paul, "everybody will understand that there is nothing

in these stories about you, but that, on the contrary, you are yourself guided by reverence for the Law.

"As for these believers among the Nations, we have already sent out through you, in the letter signed by James,[1] our decision that they must avoid food that has been offered on altars to idols, the taste of blood, flesh of animals that have been strangled, and unclean vice."

Paul knew that the forms of ceremony in the Temple were not the heart of worship of God. They were the ceremonies of one people. Yet, with that all-embracing sweep of his passion for winning men, Paul consented to do as the Elders suggested.

On the very next day he began to carry out the act of purification for himself along with the four men. Paul went into the Temple courts with the men.

"I wish to join these men," he said, "and to pay their charges, till the vow is accomplished and till they can be freed from it."

Day after day, and at Paul's expense, they each offered gifts of money and oil, a ram, a lamb, and cakes. On the seventh day they would have fulfilled all the ceremonies. But that seventh day never came for Paul.

With crafty eyes his enemies watched him. They had seen him walking in the streets with Trophimus from Ephesus—to them a "sinner of the Gentiles," a man without the law. They saw Paul go up the

[1] See chapter xvi.

steps to the marble parapet where the great stone stood which said:

> LET NO FOREIGNER ENTER WITHIN THE SCREEN AND ENCLOSURE SURROUNDING THE SANCTUARY. WHOSOEVER IS TAKEN SO DOING WILL HIMSELF BE THE CAUSE THAT DEATH OVERTAKETH HIM.

Paul crossed the line and went through the opening. His bare feet were upon the marble of the holy court. The hour had come. The Jews from Asia were there, possibly some of those who had plotted his death two months earlier, when Paul was starting to sail from Corinth, and had been baulked. They would not be foiled again. They dashed at him, gripped his mantle and raised a cry that thrilled the heart of Pharisee and Zealot alike.

"To the rescue, Men of Israel! Help! Help! Here is the man who teaches everyone everywhere against the Chosen People, against the Law of Moses, against this Holy Place. Help! Help!"

To every quarter of the Temple the cry rang out. Men dashed in from all sides to join in the defence. The cry rang across the roofs to the Roman Castle by the Temple, where the sentinel stood like a statue on the turret of Antony's tower.

"He has brought Greeks inside the temple and de-

filed this holy Place," cried the Jews from Asia. "To the rescue, Men of Israel. Help!"

Up the streets of the city the cry ran like wildfire. The Jews dashed into the Temple. But they would not defile the sacred place by killing him there.

"Out of the Temple with him!" came the cry. Dragging, pushing, shouting, waving, the whole mob surged toward the gates and into the open place without. The gates of the Temple enclosure swung to with a clang and were bolted.

"Kill him! Kill him," cried the fanatics, some of them the men who had cried before Pilate, as Jesus Christ stood on trial thirty years earlier, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" and had yelled, "Stone him! Stone him!" in the hour of Stephen's death. They lifted their sticks and began to beat him furiously over the head and shoulders and back.

But the sentinel on Antony's tower had already taken action. He sent down word to the commander of the garrison regiment, who rapped out an order, and in a few minutes with officers and men was hurrying to the spot. Dashing aside the mob the company marched to the centre. The cry, "The soldiers are coming!" was raised. The staves were dropped and silence fell.

"Who is he?" asked the commander, Lysias. "What has he done?"

Some of the crowd roared one thing, some another. He could not learn the facts for the uproar.

"Chain him," ordered Lysias. Two chains were clasped on his wrists. At that moment Paul left the

world of freedom. He never moved for years to come without the sound of the clank of his fetters in his ear.

"Lead him to the citadel," ordered Lysias. Along the front of the Temple and out under the shadow of the Roman tower they moved; the Jewish mob raging and yelling behind and around. They thronged upon Paul, clutching at his robe till the soldiers had actually to carry him.

"Away with him! Away with the fellow from the earth! Away with him!"

At last the soldiers reached the steps of the citadel. They were about to lead Paul to the cells in the barracks when he turned to the commander.

"May I say a word to you?" he asked Lysias, speaking in Greek.

"You know Greek!" said the astonished commander. "Then you are not the Egyptian who in days gone by raised the four thousand Assassins and led them out into the desert?"

"I am a Jew," said Paul with quiet dignity, "a native of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city. Pray let me speak to the people."

Paul, bound as he was and bruised, stood forward on the top of the steps before the mob and began to speak to them in Hebrew—their own tongue. Something in the presence of that undaunted figure, and in the sound of that vibrant voice which had won the hearing of men in many lands, swept over that seething mob. A deep hush came on them, like the whisper and the silence that come over a field of corn as it sways to the breeze and then is still.

"Brothers and fathers," he said, "listen to the defence I now make before you."

When they heard him speaking in Hebrew they were all the more quiet. So he went on.

"I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated at the feet of Gamaliel in all the strictness of our ancestral Law, ardent for God as you all are to-day. I persecuted this Way of religion to the death, chaining and imprisoning both men and women, as the high priest and all the council of elders can testify. It was from them that I got letters to the brotherhood at Damascus, and then journeyed thither to bind those who had gathered there and bring them back to Jerusalem for punishment.

"Now, as I neared Damascus on my journey, suddenly about noon a brilliant light from heaven flashed round me. I dropped to the earth and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?'

"'Who are you?' I asked.

"He said to me, 'I am Jesus the Nazarene, whom you are persecuting.'

"I said, 'What shall I do, Lord?'

"And the Lord said to me, 'Rise up and go into Damascus; there you shall be told about all that you are destined to do.'

"As I could not see owing to the dazzling glare of that light, my companions took my hand, and so I reached Damascus. Then a certain Ananias, a devout man in the Law, who had a good reputation among all the Jews there, came to me and standing beside me said, 'Saul, my brother, regain your sight!'"

The crowd of Jews with uplifted faces listened in silence to the wonderful story. Paul went on.

"The same moment I regained my sight and looked up at Ananias. Then he said, 'The God of our fathers has appointed you to know His will, to see the Just One, and to hear Him speak with His own lips. For you are to be a witness for Him before all men, a witness of what you have seen and heard. And now, why do you wait? Get up and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on His name.'

"When I returned to Jerusalem, it happened that while I was praying in the Temple I fell into a trance and saw Him saying to me, 'Make haste! Leave Jerusalem quickly, for they will not accept your evidence about Me.'

"'But, Lord,' I said, 'they surely know that it was I who imprisoned and flogged those who believed in You throughout the synagogues, and that I stood and approved when the blood of your martyr Stephen was being shed, taking charge of the clothes of his murderers!' But He said to me, 'Go; I will send you afar to the Nations'——"

At that word the silence broke into a thunder of rage. That was the root of all Paul's offence, that he had gone with his Message to the Nations beyond. And now he dared to blaspheme by saying that God —the God whose Chosen People the Jews were—had told him to do so, and had told him in the holy Temple.

"Away with such a creature from the earth!" they yelled. "He is not fit to live."

They tore off their clothes in a frenzy of angry

grief, and like mourners grabbed the dust of the roadway and flung it into the air.

Lysias was mystified. What made the Jews foam with such hysterical rage? They were too wild to tell him intelligibly. Paul must.

"Take him into the barracks," said Lysias to his officers. "Examine him under the lash and report."

They saluted and marched Paul away. They took him to the thrashing-post and strapped him to it, so that he might not struggle. When he was thrashed and his spirit cowed, they would make him confess his crimes.

Paul spoke to the officer who was standing by giving orders.

"Are you allowed to scourge a Roman citizen," he asked, "and to scourge him without trial?"

The officer was aghast. Lysias, he knew, would be degraded from his rank, and severely punished if he beat a Roman citizen and word of it reached Rome. It was bad enough even to have bound him. He hurried to Lysias and said to him:

"What are you going to do? This man is a Roman citizen."

Lysias rose at once and went out to where Paul stood strapped to the post.

"Tell me," he said, "are you a Roman citizen?"

"Yes," replied Paul.

"I had to pay a large sum of money to buy my citizenship," said the wondering commander.

"But I was born a citizen," replied Paul with pride.

He was loosed from his bonds at once, and led away. In that hour the three threads of Paul's life,

the Jewish, Greek, and Roman, had all stood him in good stead: the Greek when he spoke to Lysias, the Jewish when he quelled the uproar, the Roman when he was bound. Paul lay down to sleep that night, a prisoner, yet freer than all the hide-bound fanatics who had tried to take his life.

But Lysias was still puzzled as to what Paul had done to infuriate the Jews. The next morning, therefore, he sent an order down to the Temple that the high priests and the Sanhedrin—the highest authority in the Jewish world—should come and meet with Paul. Lysias, when the Sanhedrin had come together, brought Paul down and placed him in front of them. Paul looked at them with a steady gaze, entirely fearless of their anger.

"Brothers," he said, "I have lived with a perfectly good conscience before God down to this present day."

It was too much. Ananias, the high priest, purple with rage, shouted to those near Paul:

"Smite him!" he cried. "Strike him on the mouth."

Paul lost his temper, and swinging round toward the white-robed Ananias he burst out:

"You white-washed wall, God will strike you! You sit there to judge me by the Law, do you? And you break the Law by ordering me to be struck!"

"What," said some of the bystanders to Paul, "would you rail at God's high priest?"

"Brothers," said Paul, "I did not know that he was high priest."

At this point Paul, realizing that the Sanhedrin was

made up as to one-half of Sadducees who did not believe in the resurrection of man, and as to the other of Pharisees who did believe in the resurrection, shouted to them.

"I am a Pharisee, brothers, the son of Pharisees! It is for the hope of the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial!"

At once a quarrel broke out. Lysias could make no sense of all this wrangling and clamour;—the Sadducees urging Paul's death, the Pharisees forgetting in their defence of their own teaching their hatred of Paul. Scribes of the Pharisees rose up, and the court listened.

"We find nothing wrong about this man," said the Pharisaic scribes. "What if some spirit or angel has spoken to him?"

The uproar redoubled; the Sadducees stood and shouted and pressed toward Paul as though to tear him to pieces. Lysias ordered the troops to be brought from the citadel and they formed a bodyguard to protect Paul. The soldiers took him, driving the maddened Jews back, and led him into the barracks. But Lysias was no wiser as to the cause of all the uproar. Paul, as he lay that night with all the future black before him, was conscious of the real presence of his Lord by him.

"Courage!" said the Presence. "As you have testified to me at Jerusalem, so you must do at Rome."

The Jews who saw their archenemy Paul snatched from under their very hand by the Roman power were determined that, even now, he should not escape.

Between forty and fifty of them came together at dawn on the next day in secret. They formed a plot for an ambuscade. Standing together, they took a most solemn oath that they would not taste food till they had killed Paul. They went, then, down to the Temple and gained audience with the high priests and elders.

"We have," they said, "taken a solemn oath to taste no food till we have killed Paul. Now, you and the Sanhedrin must let the commander know that you propose to investigate this case in detail, so that he may have Paul brought down to you. We will be all ready and will kill him on the way down."

A young man overheard men talking about the plot. He was Paul's nephew. He hurried up to the citadel, got entrance to the barracks and was allowed to see Paul, to whom he told the whole story. Paul called to one of the officers.

"Take this young man," he said, "to the commander, for he has some news to give him."

So the officer led Paul's nephew to Lysias.

"The prisoner Paul," he said, "has summoned me to ask if I would bring this young man to you, as he has something to tell you."

The commander took Paul's nephew by the hand and led him aside and asked him in private, "What is the news you have for me?"

"The Jews have agreed," he answered, "to ask you to bring Paul down to-morrow to the Sanhedrin, on the plea that they propose to examine his case in detail. Now, do not let them persuade you. More than forty of them are lying in ambush for him, and they have taken a solemn oath neither to eat nor to

drink till they have murdered him. They are all ready at this moment, awaiting your consent."

Lysias paused to think; then he dismissed the youth. His mind was swiftly made up. He knew the anger of Rome if a Roman citizen, even a prisoner, suffered death by murder when in the charge of a Roman official.

"Tell nobody," he said, "that you have informed me of this."

As Paul's nephew went out Lysias called to two officers, who stood before him awaiting orders.

"Get ready by eight o'clock to-night two hundred infantry, with rations, to march as far as Cæsarea; also seventy troopers, and two hundred spearmen."

XXX

"I APPEAL TO CÆSAR!"

BY the wild glare of torches seventy horses were led out from the garrison stables. Their hoofs clattered up the stone way under Antony's tower. File after file of footmen gathered there till two hundred soldiers, with their broad swords and the bosses of their shields reflecting the yellow torch-light, and two hundred spearmen, together with seventy horse-soldiers, stood ready for the night march out on to the Judæan hills.

They were a host of men to guard Paul. But the band of fierce Jews had vowed to slay him before they ate or drank; and such a vow meant that he must be prepared for a swift and violent attack. The captain of the guard knew that in any gateway cloaked and armed figures might be standing, hidden in the shadows —men who would gladly die to kill the man whom they knew to be the greatest enemy of the narrow Jewish belief. The captain knew, also, that to allow the Jews to slay a Roman citizen who was in his charge would bring on himself the punishment of Cæsar. It was for these reasons that he made ready this guard of four hundred and seventy soldiers for Paul.

Paul swung himself astride his horse. There came the sharp word of command, followed by the rattle

of arms as the men moved forward through the darkness to the city wall of Jerusalem. The gates swung slowly open and the shod feet of the horses on the flagged road echoed under the vaulting of the great archway. They were out on the open road.

The men who plotted to kill him were baulked. They now must either waylay him in the hills or themselves die of starvation or break their vow to kill him before they fed again. As Paul felt the night air on his cheek, when they came through the gates, he would pass the place where, as a young man, he had stood guarding the clothes of those who stoned Stephen. It would be strange if, in the darkness of the night, the memory of that day did not flood across Paul's thought and flush his cheek with shame, mixed with a strange joy that now he himself was among the persecuted Nazarenes.

His horse breasted the hill. Surrounded by the guard of soldiers, he pressed on along the north road, over the rocky shoulder of the Judæan hills, bearing westward through the dark defiles. They all knew that the enemy might leap out from behind some boulder. If any ambush had been prepared, however, the plotters remained hidden, overawed by the force guarding Paul. Did the ancient spirit of the proud little tribe of Benjamin leap in him as they passed by Gibeah, where his great namesake, King Saul, had lived?

By the time the dawn came up they had outdistanced all probable danger of ambuscade, for the hill country was past and the plain lay before them. But the force of soldiers went on, dropping gradually

toward the plain by the Roman road. Then, crossing the valley of Ajilon, by the road which ran parallel with the Mediterranean coast, they came out to the fortress and town of Antipatris,[1] where a halt was called.

Both because all serious danger of attack was gone and for the sake of greater speed in travelling, the four hundred foot-soldiers turned here and marched back to the castle at Jerusalem. The seventy horse-soldiers with Paul trotted forward more swiftly than before along the northern road, with the hills of Samaria rising on their right, and on their left the slopes dropping to the Mediterranean plain. At last, turning west, they left the rocky hills and gained the soft land. To their left lay the shining yellow of the sand dunes, and beyond the sand the glittering ripples of the Mediterranean. Cantering over the ridge they came in full sight of Cæsarea with its theatre and stadium, its white marble temples and, beyond, jutting out into the Mediterranean itself, the square grim mass of the citadel.

Headed by the captain of the troop they rode straight to the house of the Roman governor. When Paul was ushered into the presence of Felix, the representative of Nero himself, the captain felt in his tunic and brought out the roll on which Claudius Lysias, the chief captain at Jerusalem, had written his letter to the governor, to whom he now handed the parchment. Felix read the letter, which ran:

"Greetings from Claudius Lysias to the most excellent governor Felix.

[1] Called locally Kalactras-le-ain.

"This man was taken by the Jews, who would have killed him, but I came with soldiers and rescued him, for I had been given to understand that he was a Roman citizen.

"Wishing to know what charges they brought against him, I took him before their (the Jews') council. I found that he was accused of breaking their law, but that he was not charged with having done anything that called for punishment by death or even imprisonment.

"When I was told that the Jews were lying in wait for this man, I at once sent him to you. I have also instructed his accusers to lay their case against him before you.

"Farewell."

. . . . . .

Felix read the letter through, and, looking up, scanned with curiosity this man, who, though a Jew himself, had fired the Jews with such hatred; and who was also a citizen of Rome itself.

"To what province of the empire do you belong?" he asked.

"To the province of Cilicia," answered Paul.

"I will hear your case," Felix announced, "when your accusers have come down from Jerusalem."

Then turning to his officials he said:

"Keep this man in Herod's Judgment Hall."

Paul waited and watched for five days. Then another cavalcade rode into Cæsarea from Jerusalem, headed by the high priest of Jerusalem himself, the greatest man among the Jews and Paul's most powerful enemy. A skilful barrister named Tertullus rode

with him. Paul was led into the great hall. Felix was seated there in his marble chair of judgment on a raised platform, and beneath him were his secretaries. There stood the lictors carrying the axes of authority. Soldiers guarded the judge. The bearded high priest, in his robes, sat in dignified silence. When Paul was led to his place behind a marble balustrade, Felix signalled to Tertullus to open the case for the prosecution.

Tertullus, with the subtlety of the Oriental orator, began his speech by attempting to flatter the judge and then to prejudice him against Paul.

"Most noble Felix," he began. "We always and in all places live under your rule with thankfulness, for it is through you that our nation enjoys great quiet, and it is by your forethought and provision that great boons come to us."

We can imagine that Felix, who was used to this kind of pleading, would wave his hand impatiently as though saying, "Get to the business before us." So Tertullus hastened on.

"Nevertheless, in order that I may not weary you, I pray that, in your clemency, you will listen to a few words from us."

Then, turning and pointing with scornful finger to Paul, he began his attack, saying:

"We have found this man a pestilent fellow, a mover of rebellion among all the Jews throughout the world,[1] and (he sneered) a ringleader in the party of the Nazarenes. He has also gone about to profane the Temple, so that we took him and would have

[1] That is, the world of the Mediterranean.

judged him according to our law, had not the chief captain, Lysias, come and, with great violence, wrested him away out of our hands. Lysias told us to come and lay our case against him before you, so that you might have the whole charge before you."

Felix asked the other Jews there whether the accusations brought by Tertullus against Paul were true. And they all nodded their heads and said "Yes."

Felix now turned to Paul and beckoned to him to speak. Paul began with an art even more skilful than that of Tertullus, by suggesting that the long experience Felix had of the Jews of Judæa, and especially Jerusalem, would have taught him the lengths to which their fierce religious jealousy would carry them.

"I answer for myself all the more cheerfully," he began, "because you have been a judge for many years over this nation.

"It is even now only twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem to worship. They did not find me disputing in the Temple with any man, nor raising the people into ferment either in the synagogues or the city itself. They have no proof whatever of the charges they bring against me.

"But this I confess to you that I worship the God of my fathers, believing all the things which are written in the Law and the Prophets," sweeping his hand toward his accusers, and adding with a touch of scorn, "after the way that *they* call heresy. And I hold the same hope that they do toward God, believing that there is resurrection of the dead. And I

am always most careful in these matters to avoid offence toward God and men.

"I have been away for many years, and came bringing gifts and offerings to my nation, when some Jews from Asia found me in the Temple. I had cleansed myself and done all the acts of purification. I was with no mob nor any tumult. These men ought to have been here to bring charges if they have any against me. Either that or let those who are here—belonging to the Jewish Council—say whether they found any evil in me while I stood before their Council."

Felix could see that the evidence against Paul was altogether too flimsy and vague to make it possible to condemn him. Accusation and denial were pitted against one another. So he deferred the case till an impartial witness like Claudius Lysias, of Jerusalem, should come down.

He called a centurion to him and said:

"Guard Paul, but give liberty for his friends to come to visit him."

Seeing how poor the evidence was against Paul, it is possible that Felix would have found him "not guilty" of the charges brought against him and would have set him free. But he was not a strictly just man, and, like many other governors of Roman provinces, he wished to be bribed with money before he would set prisoners free. His wife, too, was a Jewess, named Drusilla, and he may have kept Paul from going free in order to please her.

One day Felix and Drusilla sent for Paul to go to their house, as they wanted to hear from him more

of what he believed. Passing the Roman sentry at the gate, the guard led him through the courtyard, where reflections from the sparkling water gleamed on the marble pillars, to the governor's Hall of Audience. Paul, prisoner as he was, spoke boldly and with fiery eloquence and strong reasoning. He laid before Felix and Drusilla such a picture of pure, temperate strength and such a splendid ideal of manly straightness; he spoke with such awful power about the punishment of the unjust and the unclean, that it seemed as though he were the judge and Felix the man at the bar of judgement. And Felix trembled. His conscience was awakened. He shrank from the picture of himself that he saw. So he said:

"Go now, for this time; when I have a convenient opportunity, I will call for you."

For two whole years Paul was kept at Cæsarea, waiting the pleasure of Felix.

He would wander guarded in the busy streets among the jostling throng of people coming and going. He could see men of many nations in this Roman town on the Mediterranean seaboard of Syria; Romans from Italy walking with all the proud confidence of conquest in their bearing, brisk Greek merchants, dignified Arabs of the desert in cloaks of orange and red and brown, bringing merchandise down from the East on the slow-stepping, soft-footed camels; bearded Jews looking out at their Roman conquerors from under their bushy eyebrows with ill-concealed hate, and swarthy Egyptians from the Nile. As an educated Jew, born in a city whose university was famous for

its school of Greek philosophy, trained under the greatest tutor in Jerusalem, yet also by birth a citizen of the whole Roman Empire, Paul, with that loved companion and strong physician Luke who stood by him through these hard days, may well have been the only men in all Cæsarea at that time whose mind and experience were broad and deep enough to take all these varied people into their sympathetic understanding.

The great citadel stood with its foundations on a sea-smitten rock, as though it would rule the waves as well as the land. On either side of it is a bay, where the sea runs over yellow sands. Paul, as a prisoner guarded, would pace these sands north and south out to the rocky headlands, while the Mediterranean rippled at his feet or in the winter its breakers boomed on the great curving breakwater which almost enclosed the harbour. The ships of the empire came there, and as he watched them set sail again out of the harbour into the shining seas, bound for Rome, the resolution that had held Paul for a long time became fixed. He, too, would go to Rome, even though it were as a prisoner; and carry his burning message to the very heart of the world.

At last his opportunity of doing this came. At the end of two years Felix was recalled to Rome, and a new governor, Porcius Festus, sailed into the harbour at Cæsarea. Within three days of landing Festus rode up to Jerusalem.

Immediately the high priest and the chief men among the Jews, striking swiftly at Paul, went to Festus, told him their story, and pleaded with the

governor to get rid of Paul by sending for him to be tried in Jerusalem. Their plan was to place an ambush among the hills behind rocks on the way and have Paul slain.

Festus, however, refused. He said:

"I am going down to Cæsarea shortly and will try him then. Let those among you who are able to leave go down with me and bring your charge against this man."

Within a fortnight's time, Festus went back to Cæsarea, and on the very next day took his seat in the Judgment Hall and ordered Paul to be brought before him. Again the Jews laid their charges against him, but could not prove them. Again Paul said:

"I have not broken at all the laws either of the Jews or the Temple or Rome."

"Will you go to Jerusalem to be judged by me?" asked Festus.

Paul saw the peril from the Jews in Jerusalem. He trusted the Roman justice. His opportunity of reaching Rome had come. He seized it swiftly.

"I stand," he said, pointing to Festus, "at Cæsar's judgment-seat, where I ought to be judged. If I have done anything worthy of death I am ready to die. If there are none of these things of which I am rightly accused, no man may deliver me into their hand.

"I APPEAL TO CÆSAR."

XXXI

THE KING AND THE MAN IN CHAINS

THERE was a moment of silence in the court as Paul flung down his challenge.

"I appeal to Cæsar."

Festus was clearly startled at Paul's audacity, while recognising his right to make the appeal. A short consultation took place between the governor and his advisers, and then Festus, looking Paul in the face, said:

"You have appealed to Cæsar? To Cæsar you shall go."

Some days later there was a great stir in the city. A gorgeous cavalcade of men, riding Arab chargers harnessed with jewelled trappings, entered Cæsarea. From every window curious eyes peered, and every house-top was crowded to see the King Agrippa and his new consort, Queen Bernice, pass through the streets, to greet the new governor.[1] Festus feasted the King and Queen. There would be plays in the great open-air marble theatre that stood half a mile from the sea, races in the stadium and sports in the harbour.

At last, after some time of feasting, Festus was one day talking political business with Agrippa, when he remembered Paul.

[1] The relation of King Agrippa to Festus would be like that of a great Maharajah in India to the British viceroy.

"There is a certain man," said Festus, "left here in chains by Felix. When I was in Jerusalem the chief Jews pressed me to give judgment against him. I told them that the Romans did not execute a man before he and his accusers had met face to face, and he had opportunity to answer for himself about the crime with which he was charged.

"When they came here, however, they brought no such charge as I had expected, but attacked him on matters of their own superstition; and of one Jesus, who was dead, but Paul insisted that he was alive. I was so doubtful about questions of this kind that I asked him whether he would be judged in Jerusalem. But when Paul appealed to Cæsar, I gave orders for him to be kept till I could send him to Rome."

So unusual a case interested King Agrippa.

"I would like to hear the man myself," he said.

"You shall hear him to-morrow," Festus answered, and gave orders for the "Hall of Hearing" to be prepared and for Paul to be brought up for examination.

On the following day, when Paul was led into the Judgment Hall, he found, therefore, not only Festus, but also—seated beside him, in great pomp—King Agrippa and Bernice. Round them was a brilliant crowd of people, the chief captains of the soldiers in all the glitter of their polished armour; and the men of high standing in the city, all dressed in their finest robes.

Festus then stood up, pointing to Paul, and said:

"King Agrippa and all who are present, you see this man about whom the Jews, both at Jerusalem and here, cry that he ought not live any longer. I have determined to send him to Rome, seeing that he has done nothing for which he could be condemned to death. But I have nothing definite about which to write to my Lord, the Emperor. I have brought him before you and"—turning to the royal pair at his side —"especially before you, King Agrippa, so that, after he has been examined, I may have something to write. For I do feel it to be senseless to send a prisoner and not, at the same time, to say what charges are brought against him."

When Festus was again seated, he left it to the King to say what he wished.

King Agrippa, turning to Paul, said:

"You are permitted to speak for yourself."

Paul was faced by the power of Rome and the fanaticism of the Jew; and he himself was a chained prisoner. But with that strange power that comes from a mighty and well-trained mind, free from fear and utterly given to a strong purpose, he became, not the cringing pleader that an Eastern king like Agrippa might expect to see, but a great ambassador representing an Almighty God.

"I think myself happy, King Agrippa," he began, "that I am to make my defence before you, with regard to the actions of which the Jews accuse me; especially because you are an expert in all the customs and questions among them. So I desire that you will listen to me patiently.

"The way I lived as a youth and afterward among

my own people and at Jerusalem is well known to all the Jews, who could, if they would, bear witness that I lived in the strictest way of our religion as a Pharisee. And now"—he went on with biting sarcasm—"I stand here to be judged because I believe it possible that God will carry out the Promise He made to our fathers! It is," exclaimed Paul, "because of this hope that the Jews accuse me, O King! Why should you think it impossible to believe that God raises the dead?"

Then Paul, with sudden dramatic change, placed himself alongside his own enemies, painting with swift strokes the picture of what he himself had been as the terrible persecutor of the Christians.

"Truly," he said, "I used to think that I ought to do many things to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth. In Jerusalem I had many of them put into prison—and even when they were put to death, I cast my pebble into the urn as a vote against them. I harried them in their meeting-places. I tried to make them blaspheme. And I became so exceedingly mad against them that I even pursued them to foreign cities."

"How," his hearers would be asking themselves, "could such a man possibly become a follower of this Jesus, the Nazarene?"

The answer came swiftly as Paul lay before them his commission as the King's ambassador.

"As I was journeying to Damascus with the authority of the chief priests themselves at midday, O King, I saw on the way a light from the sky, brighter than the blaze of the sun, shining round about me and my

travelling companions. And, as we were all fallen on to the road, I heard a voice saying to me:

"'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goad.'

"And I said, 'Who are you, Lord?'"

"'I am Jesus, whom you persecute.'"

We can feel, even now, the tense silence in the Hall of Hearing as every eye watched Paul and every ear drank in his words while he retold the story which you have already read, of how he, the persecutor, was to go to the foreign peoples to open their eyes, so that they might turn from darkness to light.

"So, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision; but I told those in Damascus and in Jerusalem and in all Judæa, aye! and the foreign nations also, that they should repent and turn to God, doing work that would show their real sorrow. And it was for this that the Jews seized hold of me in the Temple and tried to kill me! . . . I say nothing except that what the Prophets and Moses said would come; how that Christ must suffer and He first would by His rising bring light to the people at home and abroad."

As Paul's swift words stirred the minds of the nobles and the soldiers of high rank, we can feel how the men who at the beginning were listening with the stolid, sneering indifference of the Roman to "this Jewish fanatic" would be drawn, in spite of themselves, into keen interest. Now, as always, it was impossible to be indifferent to Paul. You were bound either to fight him violently or side with him with

all your might. So, as Paul stopped speaking, Festus burst out in a loud voice with:

"Paul, you are mad; your great learning has turned your brain."

"I am not mad, most excellent Festus," replied Paul in a good-tempered way. "But I speak the words of sober truth. The king here," pointing to Agrippa, "knows these things, for I feel certain that none of them are hidden from him. All this has not been done in a corner."

Then, turning to King Agrippa, Paul shot out, with all his passion, a direct appeal:

"King Agrippa, do you believe the Prophets? I know that you do."

It was a swift home-thrust, and Agrippa could not say "No"; yet if he said "Yes," he knew that Paul would immediately ask, "Why will you not believe then that the things they foretold have really happened, and that Jesus was the Messiah?"

The tables were turned. As with Felix, the governor, so again with this Oriental king, Agrippa seemed the prisoner on his trial and Paul in the chair of the judge. So the king evaded Paul's question with a laugh.

"With but little persuasion," he said, "you would make me a Christian."

We can see Paul leaning forward and with eager eyes saying, as he swung his arm round toward the whole body of listeners now intent on this strange dialogue, such as was never heard before between prisoner and king:

"I would to God that, whether with little persua-

sion or much, not you alone, but all these that hear me to-day, might become just as I am "—and then, lifting his chained wrist—" except these bonds."

The eagerness of Paul's tone left Agrippa no answer that he could make; so, in silence, he stood up—to show that the audience was closed—and the king with his wife and Festus and with all the Court went back again. And, as they talked together afterward over the case of Paul, Agrippa said to Festus:

" If this man had not appealed to Cæsar, he might have been set free."

But Paul had appealed to Rome. The die was cast. So Festus called in Julius, a centurion, who belonged to that legion of soldiers whose duty it was to control the courier-service on the Roman roads and to watch the service of ships that carried corn and slaves and prisoners to Rome from the different provinces. Festus handed Paul over to this man's charge with orders to convey him with some other prisoners to Rome.

There was no ship in Cæsarea harbour at that time which was sailing direct to Rome. But it happened that there was a ship just ready to start along the south coast of Asia Minor. It was to touch at Myra, where Julius was fairly sure of finding a corn-ship sailing to Rome—as many of these Alexandrian *frumentarii*[1] came to harbour there.

At last the day had come when Paul was to leave the provinces of Rome for the capital itself. He went aboard the ship with Julius, the centurion, and

[1] The fleet of ships which brought constant supplies of corn to Rome, which then had over 1,000,000 inhabitants.

with other prisoners. With him were some faithful friends—among them Luke, his doctor-companion, and the old friend from Macedonia, named Aristarchus. It may even have been necessary for them to ship as Paul's slaves in order to be with him. They would not care how they went so long as they were with their leader. And it always made Paul much happier to have companions with him.

The ship cast off, and, hoisting her sail, went out through the narrow opening at the north end of the harbour between the great breakwater and the headland. As Paul felt the heave of the Great Sea under the ship and saw her bows plunging their way northwest, he knew that before him was the most daring of all his adventures. But he did not know the perils that still threatened him before he would see the Emperor face to face.

BOOK IV

FINISHING THE COURSE

XXXII

THE TYPHOON

LEANING on the ship's rail as the sun set over the sea, after they left the Cæsarea harbour, Paul took his last look on Mount Carmel, that lifted its strong outline into the clouds. But later, night having fallen, only the men on the midnight watch would see the torches of Tyre as the ship sailed on its way northward.

The next day, however, the vessel sailed into the harbour at Sidon, where she found ships of as many nations as those she had left at Cæsarea. The cleverest sailors on the coast were at Sidon, where the sound of the shipwright's mallet, and all the hurly-burly of a busy port, struck on Paul's ear as the ship cast anchor.

He told the centurion that he had friends in Sidon. For he had been there twice before with Barnabas, and again and again afterward. Julius had already come under the spell of Paul and said that he might go ashore, prisoner though he was. So he went with that eagerness which always came on Paul at the opportunity of seeing good friends.

When the time came for going aboard again and sailing from Sidon, the wind had stiffened from the west. The ship was bound northwest for Myra on the coast of Lycia, right across Cyprus, which lay in her

track. But she could not sail south of Cyprus in the teeth of the wind with her one large mainsail. She made north, therefore, with the wind on her port beam, so getting under the lee of the island. As he passed Cyprus, Paul might see Salamis and remember the far-off voyage, twelve years before, when he with Barnabas first came in sight of the port on their first venture as missionaries. Between that day and this he had sailed, ridden, and trudged his thousands of miles over highland and lowland, sea and river, drenched with rain and snow, and scorched by the sun. Beaten and stoned, imprisoned and robbed, he had yet never turned back from his great adventure.

The ship sailed past Salamis (with its sword-fish headland) still northward, searching for the calmer coast winds of the Cilician and Pamphylian sea. So Paul came within sight of the plain where he was born, and the great mountain range which he had gazed at as a boy from the roof of his father's house. It was his last look at his homeland, for the ship's nose was now turned west. The winds had, as the captain had expected, become quieter and milder under the coast.

It was slow work, however, tacking to and fro to take advantage of the light off-shore breezes. But at last they came in sight of the hilly coast of Lycia, and sailed into the strange great harbour of Myra, which lay in front of the beautiful gorge that led up into the hills. Julius, the centurion, looked eagerly and anxiously at the ships that lay in the port. His face lighted as he saw a ship, whose rig and cut told him at once that she hailed from the Egyptian coast. He found, true enough, that she had been driven north

from Egypt to Myra, and was bound for Italy. She was one of the fleet of wheat ships which sailed for Alexandria to Puteoli carrying food for the city of Rome.

Julius gave the order for his soldiers and prisoners to change ships. They climbed on to the wheat ship, which already had many people aboard. They loosed from Myra and tried to bear up to Cnidus, farther west on the same coast. But the winds stuck obstinately against them. Tack and turn as she would the ship hardly made progress. She had worked windward for many days before she made Cnidus, which was only a day's good sailing from Myra. If sailing was difficult here, it would be worse ahead, for, from this point, the protecting coast left them. The captain of the ship turned her course south to get under the lee of Crete, in the hope of finding more favourable winds.[1]

So it proved, for when they swung round the bold headland of Salmone, they ran into calmer water and soon fetched the harbour of Fair Havens.

The Mediterranean Sea is not safe for sailing ships from November to March 5, and always they thought of the sea as closed during that time. The ship in which Paul was travelling had made such a slow voyage that now she had no hope of getting to Italy before the winter gales started. They were bound to stop.

Paul, born as he was at a great port, and with all his experiences of sailing, knew the Great Sea in all its

[1] Every nautical detail of the narrative has been worked out by the Mediterranean naval expert, James Smith, in his authoritative "Voyage and Shipwreck of St. Paul."

moods. He spoke to the centurion, the master, and the owner saying:

"I can see that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only to the cargo and the ship, but to the lives of us on board."

But they thought that the harbour of Phenice, further west along the Cretan coast, was a better harbour for wintering in; and it was distant only a few hours' sailing. They therefore overruled Paul, and sailed.

A soft south wind, with the warmth of the sands of Egypt in it, moved on the face of the waters, as the ship put out from Fair Havens. With her bows gently cleaving the coast-waters and the breeze on her starboard beam, she must have given all on board the feeling that Paul's alarm had been needless. Hugging the coast, she soon swung round Cape Matala, and giving more to the wind, slid north-westward toward Phenice.

Away to the right they saw Mount Ida lifting her peak into the sky on the north coast. In a few hours they would be in the harbour, where they would lie for the winter. But a sharp man on the lookout would have seen, over Mount Ida, ugly weather brewing. Without warning, like a treacherous blow from a smiling friend, the wind curved from the south in a circle, and swept back from the north like a wheeling eagle striking his prey. The gale smote the boat till she reeled and wrenched at her sails, threatening to tear the mighty mainmast from its roots in the ship.

Over them the clouds whirled in the typhoon. The

white spray, lashed up from the sea under the tormenting whip of the storm, swept her deck. The little boat which was being towed behind (for it had hardly seemed worth while swinging her aboard for the short run from Fair Havens to Phenice) tossed like a cork on a thread from crest to crest of the swiftly whitening waves.

The seamen climbed the rigging to the great yard and furled the sail. All attempt to bear up against the wind was impossible; and, at a command from the captain, the men at the rudder-sweeps let her drive. Like a horse loosened from its halter she tore across the green fields of the sea, while the white-backed sea hounds leapt and bayed at her sides.

As the toppling mainmast reeled dizzily and groaned under the tear and wrench of the typhoon, the ship shivered in every beam. Her timbers began to start under the terrible leverage of the mast, and a seaman going below-decks into the hold would hear the sound that grips a sailor's heart with a chill hand—the suck and splash of water in a leaking hull.

XXXIII

SHIPWRECK

OVER the bow to windward they saw an island loom. The ship staggered on, and at last, under the lee of this island of Clauda, in smoother water, they rounded her to, pulled the ship's boat alongside from the stern, and, having baled out the seas she had shipped, swung her aboard. Cables were then uncoiled, and the sailors, clinging to the ship's sides, tugging and hauling, as she swayed and swung from trough to crest, wrapped the cables round under her hull, then across her deck and hove them tight.

When they were thus wound round the ship and made fast, the cables gripped the vessel like the hoops of a barrel. She became more rigid, and the grinding and wrenching of her leaking timbers was made less. Still the strain was terrible, largely through the pull of the mainmast. So the sailors swarmed aloft and fetched down her top gear. Then, with stormsail set, she swung again into the path of the gale, with her two paddle-rudders holding her to the starboard tack, by which alone she could escape the dreaded Syrtis quicksands.

Night fell, but the gale held. All through the dark Paul and Luke would hear the sound of the hiss and thud of the waves as they smote the ship and went seething over her streaming decks.

Did they think of that storm in the Lake of Galilee of which Luke wrote? They would surely think of the Lord who ruled that storm.

The hum of the wind in the rigging had risen to a long wail, as though the ship moaned in her agony. The waves hung over her like mountains, and then, diving with a mad swoop under her bow, lifted her up, up till her decks sloped at a dizzy angle; and then slung her down the ravine of water into the abyss.

Tossed thus, and with the leaking water in the hold menacing them, they were forced to lighten the ship. The sailors hurled overboard all kinds of things in their effort to keep her afloat. But, as a second night fell, the buffeted ship still laboured in the tempest. And, when the men on the morning watch strained their eyes as dawn came up, they could see nothing save the wild, tumbling waste of waters.

The ship must be lightened still further. Everything loose was overboard already, so her tackling was bound to go. Paul and Luke joined in the work, and it may well be that the mainyard—which was often an immense spar as long as the vessel itself—was thrown overboard by the united efforts of crew and passengers.

"We cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship," writes Luke.

Day after dreary day wore on. Morning, noon, and night dragged by, but never did the sky break. They looked anxiously skyward for a glimpse of the sun, or for the gleam of a star, by which they could determine their direction; but the unbroken gray of sea and sky mocked the ship.

The sailors noted the ominous heaviness in the roll of the now water-logged ship. They must have believed that she would founder, for

"All hope of being saved was taken away."

Kneeling on the deck, they prayed to the Twin Brethren, Castor and Pollux, the guardian gods of ships, as the Romans believed. But no help came. Despair fell upon them. Their hearts were as heavy as the leaden sky. Yet the prisoner Paul, with that wonderful dignity of his, now seemed, by his courage and confidence, not the man in chains, but the captain.

Sweeping the faces of the crew and the passengers with eyes that never showed a flicker of fear of the tempest, he said:

"You should have listened to me, and not have loosed from Crete, to suffer all this harm and loss.

"Now, I call on you to be of good cheer, for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, though the ship will go to pieces."

The faces of all the people caught the cheerfulness of Paul, yet they could hardly believe it. How should he know? Paul went on in answer to this unspoken question:

"This very night a messenger of the God Whose I am and Whom I serve stood by me and said:

"'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must be brought before Cæsar. And God has given to you all who are sailing with you.' So be of good cheer: for I believe that it will be just as it was told me. But we must be wrecked on a certain island."

For a fortnight the nightmare of tempest had held

them. Now the fourteenth night had fallen. The gale was driving them across the sea south of the Adriatic. Suddenly there was a stir among the sailors. The quick ear of one and then of another caught a sound. Terror and hope were on them together. For they had heard the far-off boom of the breakers on a rocky headland. It was land—land for which they had hoped through all those days and nights, but land that might mean awful death in the dark on the jagged teeth of a cruel coast.

The sound was now within a quarter of a mile of them, and the white rim of foam may have been seen even in the night over the lee bow. Ahead over the starboard bow lay an opening in the coast. A man in the bows swung out the lead and sounded the depth.

"Twenty fathoms!" he called.

The ship sailed on and the sound of the breakers drew nearer. Preparations were made on board. While the sailors were busy with cables and anchors in the stern, the man in the bow threw out his lead again, and:

"Fifteen fathoms!" he cried.

The sea was shallowing. Over the lee bow the dash of the breakers could be heard, and the whirl of white spray could now be clearly seen. The order came, and with it four anchors slid from the stern, their cables ran through the rudder ports, while the rudder paddles were lifted and lashed out of the way of the waves. The splash of the anchors was followed by silent moments of waiting.

"Would they hold?"

The ship slowed, tugged at the cables—and stopped. They had lighted on a perfect ground, where anchors never start. But the galloping breakers still came in from the north-east, and swept and broke upon the ship's stern, while the leaking waters logged her hold. The anchors would not give, but the vessel would certainly break to pieces before long.

There was a movement among the seamen. The boat was loosed and swung over the side and let down. The men were following, pretending that they were going to cast out anchors from the bow—an utterly useless thing to do in the circumstances. Their real aim was to escape from the ship that they thought was doomed.

Paul saw the manœuvre. Going to the centurion, he said:

"Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved."

Julius gave a sharp order to the soldiers, who, running to the sides, drew their short swords and slashed the boat ropes. The loosened boat, caught by the whirl of wind and water, shot out—empty—and was lost in the darkness.

The black of the night was now breaking into grey. As dawn came up Paul, who knew that every man would need all the strength that he could command, stood up and cheered the people, saying:

"This is the fourteenth day that you have waited without food, having taken nothing. Take some food now to strengthen you; for not a hair shall fall from the head of any one of you."

Taking up a flat ship's loaf, Paul asked a blessing,

and, breaking the bread, ate it in front of the dejected people, soldiers, sailors, traders, and government officials who crowded the deck. They caught the spirit of courage from Paul, and ate with him.

The plan which had been formed was that when full daylight came they should look round the coast off which they were anchored, and choose a good place for running the vessel ashore. As every inch of distance from the beach would add to the danger of landing in the stormy sea, the ship must be made as light as possible, so that she would go all the nearer to the shore before grounding. They set to work and hauled from the hold sack after sack of wheat, tumbling them one after the other into the sea. The ship was lightened, so that she drew less water. By this time it was full day.

The sailors looked closely at the shore, but none of them had ever seen it before. There was a bay to their right; indeed, they were anchored at the mouth of the bay, with the bow of the ship toward the rocky headland that made its southern horn.

They spied in the bay a creek with a sandy beach. The captain decided to try to run for this. Even the hardiest sailor would shiver at the perilous manœuvre, for right ahead the waves broke furiously on precipices of rock, which would smash the ship and grind her timbers to splinters if they failed to swing her round in time.

At the bow and at the stern men stood ready in silence—waiting. The command rang out. With swift hands the men at the bow hoisted the foresail; at the stern some cut the anchor cables, while others

loosed the ropes that held the rudder paddles. The sail bellied; the ship began to move toward the rocks; the men at the rudders pulled. Slowly, but with gathering speed, she began to turn. With a great sigh of relief the people saw her bows swing away from the precipice toward the creek. Behind them the galloping waves drove her; but to their right, from behind a little island, another sea ran into the bay, the two meeting at the creek. There between these currents the ship moved on, till she ran aground. Her bows stuck fast in the fine mud. Her stern was buffeted and broken with the force of the waves.

As though the perils of the sea were not hard enough, the Roman soldiers, who knew the penalties they would suffer if the prisoners escaped, gathered round Julius, the centurion, and pointing to Paul, Luke, and Aristarchus, and the other prisoners, said, with hands on their sword-hilts:

"Let us kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out and escape."

Julius might have been willing enough in the ordinary way, but the fascination of Paul had gripped him, as we know. So, for the sake of Paul, he gave them orders not to kill the prisoners.

"Go," he shouted to the people, "and let all who can swim throw themselves into the sea."

They threw themselves over the side, some hesitating, others plunging in without fear. Those who could not swim seized boards and pieces of the ship which had been broken by the wrench of the waves.

The galloping breakers racing toward the beach caught them and drove them shoreward. If they had

been driven a few feet to either side they would have been crushed to death on the rocks. As it was they were hurled on to the sand, buffeted and breathless but safe.

"And so it came to pass that they escaped all safe to land."

XXXIV

THE *CASTOR AND POLLUX*

THROWN up like driftwood on the grey shore, they saw island natives coming down toward them. Battered with the tempest and feeble from the long fortnight without proper food, not even Julius and his soldiers were fit to fight for their lives if the natives were to attack them. Behind them sounded the boom of the waves and the crashing of the fast-breaking ship; before them were the approaching natives; beneath them the barren beach; above them dark clouds mercilessly pelting their tired, shivering bodies with icy rain.

The natives scattered and came on again carrying sticks in their hands; not for fighting, however, but for fire. They threw the sticks together in a sheltered place and then, crouching over to protect the sparks from the drenching rain, lighted a fire. With friendly gestures and with smiles they now welcomed the shipwrecked people to warm and dry themselves. Rejoicing at his kindness, one and another of the party went off and came back again with more sticks to keep the fire going. Among these was Paul—who was keen now, as he had been throughout, on keeping up the spirits of the soldiers, sailors, and passengers.

As he came back with an armful of sticks and placed them on the fire, one of the sticks seemed to come to

life. It shone in moving curves, and, before Paul could escape, with a quick dart the viper fastened on his hand. Its poisonous fangs shot through his skin, and as he lifted his hand up the venomous beast hung there.

Every eye was on Paul. The natives saw the chain of the prisoner hanging from his wrist and the viper hanging from his hand.

"A murderer!" they whispered. "He has escaped from the sea; but the vengeance of the gods will not let him live."

Paul shook his hand violently. The viper relaxed his hold and fell back into the blazing fire. The natives watched Paul to see the poison swell his hand and arm and body, as they knew a viper's poison would; and to see him fall down dead. They looked and looked again—watching for a long time. But nothing happened. Paul seemed entirely unaffected. They were perplexed: then talking to one another they swiftly changed their minds. This man whom the very serpents could not harm, whom could he be? He must be a god. A murderer one hour, a god the next; so their simple minds worked, leaping from one extreme to the other.

The wrecked crew found that they had been shipwrecked on the island of Malta. Some of the sailors had harboured at the island many times before, for it was on their regular sea-route. But they had not recognized it earlier, for the bay in which they were shipwrecked was on an entirely unfamiliar side of the island, far from the big harbour. Fortunately the governor of the whole island, named Publius, had his lands in the very part of Malta on which they had

been wrecked. He invited them to his home and took them in—feeding and lodging them, and giving them all the attention that he possibly could.

They stayed with him for three days, by which time the kindness and the rest, the good food and the dry shelter, made the awful weeks of the tempest seem like a nightmare from which they had awakened.

What return could they make to Publius? He was rich, and they were all stranded without any possessions. Surely they could do nothing except to thank him. Yet there was a great anxiety on the mind of Publius. His old father was very ill; burning with fever and weakened by dysentery. Paul heard of this and went into the room where the old man lay ill. He kneeled down by the bedside and asked God for that power which again and again had flowed through him. He then laid his hands on the father of Publius; the fever left him and the wasting disease dried up.[1]

Like wildfire the news was spread through the island of the great wonder worked at the hands of Paul. Publius had received more than he had given. Others came to be healed from different parts of Malta. And when they were healed they paid all honour to Paul and his companions. Again this strange pris-

[1] Paul here again used that power of healing which, we are again and again told, was exercised by the early Christians. It seems very remote from us, and sometimes difficult to believe. Yet stories come to us to-day from the mission fields of the world where faith is simpler and more implicit than at home (stories which cannot be doubted), which show that similar works of healing are done to-day there.

oner's greatness had shone out. He drew the reverence of men, who forgot his chains and only saw his wonderful character.

As the winter drew on toward spring they would go down to the great harbour of Malta, which was filled with ships that had put in there during the months when the Mediterranean was "closed" for sailing. When the grey of the cloud-skies and the drive of the harsher winds melted before the summer days, and the warm wind began to come up from Egypt with the birds of spring, the harbour began to be full of movement. The sailors caulked and scrubbed the decks, spliced ropes, repaired the sails, and hoisted them on fresh spars. The merchants were opening their warehouses and bringing out the grain and goods from store. The porters ran over the gangways and into the holds, carrying the great earthenware jars of grain and wine.

Among the ships in the harbour was a great grain ship from the Egyptian coast, which had put in here for the winter on her way from Alexandria to Italy. On her prow the picture of two men was painted—the twins, Castor and Pollux. The twins were gods whom the Romans thought of as their great protectors and helpers in the time of need. Especially the sailors said that, if the Dioscuri came aboard the ship, though invisibly, she would ride through any storm safe to harbour.

One of the great Roman writers, Epictetus, who himself did not put faith in the twins, told the people to have the faith in God which the sailors had in Castor and Pollux. He says:

"Be mindful of God, call Him to be thy helper and defender, as men call upon the Dioscuri in a storm." [1]

When the master and the captain of the ship, and Julius with the soldiers and the sailors, saw a great Roman vessel in harbour with that name upon her, they would remember their shipwreck, and would wish to sail on a ship with such a name of good-fortune as the *Castor and Pollux*. They took passage on board, and, once more, after these months on Malta, they found themselves with the swing of the waves under their feet and their faces turned toward Rome.

From Malta to Sicily, where they dropped anchor in the harbour of Syracuse, was a short sail. After three days there—probably loading and unloading cargo—they sailed out again to find themselves in the teeth of an unfavourable wind. After much tacking they ran into Rhegium, the city on the other side of the Straits of Messina on a strip of land under the shadow of the great brown mountain range that runs down to form the toe of Italy.

They had to wait only a single day in Rhegium harbour for the breeze that they wanted, for the wind veered round to the south and they were able to hoist sails and run swiftly northward.

It was the last stage of the long perilous journey, since the day when, in the autumn of the previous year, they had slipped out of the harbour of Cæsarea. The very ship seemed to rejoice. She lay herself out to complete the race with a great final sprint. The coast of Italy slipped past on their right as the *Castor*

[1] Epictetus Enchiridion, 33.

and Pollux ploughed through the waters that leapt from her side and left a shining wake behind her.

Riding the seas like a queen, she shook the spray from her prow;

> " Making the blue hills of the sea divide,
> Shearing a glittering scatter in her stride,
> And leaping on full tilt with all sails drawing
> Proud as a war-horse, snuffing battle, pawing." [1]

At last they saw, over the starboard bow, a dark pall of smoke rising from a mountain-top.

" Vesuvius," said the sailors to the travellers. They had already passed Etna and Stromboli, and knew these strange fire-mountains which sometimes threw out blazing lava and red-hot stones.

As they turned into that loveliest bay in the Roman world,[2] they saw, under the very foot of the smoking mountain, the gleam of white temples in the sun, and on the beach the gay life of a brilliant and lovely Roman pleasure city. Yet within thirty years of Paul's passing that mountain was to pour down her sides hideous streams of burning lava, which would overwhelm this city of Pompeii.

The *Castor and Pollux,* with Pompeii on her starboard, sailed northward up the bay till, in the north-east corner, she rounded the mole of the inner bay of Puteoli. Exercising the proud right which she possessed, as a member of the great Alexandria-Puteoli fleet, she sailed right into harbour with her topsails still unfurled.

[1] " Dauber," by John Masefield.

[2] The Bay of Naples, as we call it now.

With a creaking of cordage and a rush, the sailors furled her mainsail, her topsail, and her foresail; the anchor splashed, the rudder paddles were raised and strapped.

Paul, standing at the bow, would see, curving up over the ridge of the hills, the white, busy pavement of the road to Rome.

XXXV

ON THE APPIAN WAY

"IT is the *Castor and Pollux,*" one old sailor on the quay at Puteoli would say to another as the Alexandrian grain ship ran into the harbour. They would know her well, as the ships belonging to the fleet of provision-vessels ran regularly to and from Puteoli and Alexandria. But there would be a new stir of eagerness among the loungers on the quay that would soon spread to the town, when it was noised among them that there were prisoners on board from the far-away province of Syria and Judæa.

As the prisoners and the centurion Julius with his other soldiers came off the ship, a group of men crowded round Paul with eager, friendly smiles. They had never seen him before, but they knew his name from friends—like Priscilla and Aquila who had known Paul in Athens and Corinth and Ephesus, and who now were living in Rome.

"Do stay with us," they pleaded. And Paul, whose courage and strong help on board the wrecked ship had made Julius think more of him than ever, was able to persuade the centurion to stay for a few days at Puteoli. It is likely that Julius would not need much persuading, for this was the first Roman city that he had been in for a long time, and he would be eager to hear the talk about the young Emperor Nero and his

cruelties; and all the gossip of the army. He would be glad, also, to go again to the amphitheatre at Puteoli and watch the play.

Meanwhile, the group of Christians went off in triumph with Paul to sit with him in their homes, to hear him speak of the great things that had happened to him and to the Brethren—as all the worshippers of Christ then called one another—in Achaia and Macedonia, in Asia and in the far-away cities on the edge of the Roman world—Antioch and Damascus and Jerusalem. Seven days passed like a flash, and it seemed impossible to believe that at last they must wrench themselves away from Paul.

Before he started, however, they would tell him of the cruel power of Rome, of how young Nero, throned as Emperor, was beginning to kill everyone who stood in the way of his whims, and had even slain his own mother, Agrippina, only last year [1]; of the gladiators, kept and trained simply to kill one another; and of the slaves brought from far-away places—from Syria and Spain—and strange slaves were beginning to come from savage islands far, far over the Alps and beyond even Gaul, called "Britain." The Britons made splendid gladiators to fight the lions.

Paul turned his back upon the sea, and with his fellow-travellers climbed the Consular Way, over the hills behind Puteoli.

He felt proud to be a Roman citizen; for Roman rule, even though it was often cruel and hard, was generally just and strong. Every nerve in Paul's body tingled at the courage of Rome, the daring that had

[1] 59. Paul probably reached Rome in February, 60.

spread the rule of those few people on the hills of the Tiber right over the whole world of that day. It was just in line with his own world-embracing courage. But he wished with even a greater daring to draw all the people in that Roman empire into the way of Christ, from the barbarians of the islands of the North Sea to the black-skinned Ethiopian of Africa, and from the mighty pillars of Heliopolis in Syria to the pillars of Hercules that guarded the western gate of the Mediterranean. His audacious thought leapt across "the flaming ramparts of the world," for he dared to dream of founding an unseen kingdom of the Spirit over all the earth, not by the sword, but by heroic love; Jesus Christ throned above emperors and kings, consuls and generals. That was Paul's ambition.

These thoughts must have surged like a stormy sea in the mind of the chained but conquering Paul as he strode along the Way. One hundred and seventy miles of that road lay between himself and the great city. When they had trudged on for nineteen miles they saw to the right the Via Appia climbing over the hills from Brundisium, and joining their own road at Capua, where they would rest for the night. Again they went on till the road dropped and then ceased altogether, for before them lay a dismal marsh of reeds, through which a canal had been cut. Julius took a barge, and he with his company sailed and were towed by mules through these Pontine Marshes. As night fell the gnats of the marshes came buzzing around them and stinging, and all through the dark the great frogs croaked continuously.[1]

[1] Horace, *Satires* I. v.

Strong as he was, Paul sometimes fell into deep sadness. It came over him in these marshes. The malaria of the place may have infected his body and depressed his spirit. Luke, as he walked by Paul's side, watching him with the love of a brother and the skilled eye of a physician, saw this growing gloom and was troubled by it.

After they had landed from the barge at the north end of the canal through the marshes, and were once more on the road, Paul and Luke and the others saw, on the Way, a band of men hurrying toward them. The men were beginning to salute the party of travellers. Yes, indeed, it was a group of Christians who had hurried out for forty-three miles along the Via Appia to meet Paul at the Appii Forum—a travellers' resting-town. It may well be that old friends of his were there, Aquila, for instance, and John Mark, who had parted with him in anger thirteen years before, but was now his friend again.

What a change Luke noticed in Paul as they met these friends! His stride was firm and strong again; his eye lighted. It was the miracle of the power of friendship. And Luke wrote it down that when Paul saw them

"He thanked God and took courage."

Between the town of the Appii Forum and the city of Rome another group of friends met Paul at the Three Shops,[1] where there were a general store, a blacksmith's forge for shoeing any horse that might

[1] Tres Tabernæ.

have cast a shoe on the stone-way, and a refreshment-house.

At last the long white road crossed the shoulder of the Alban Mount. Right and left the road was lined with glittering marble towers and monuments, the tombs of noble Roman men and women; but, at that moment, Paul had no eyes for these. On his right the great Aqueduct gleamed in the light, as it ran on its thousand arches from the Latin Hills across the plain. His companions would tell Paul that it was only finished ten years ago, and would speak of the thousands of slaves who had toiled to build it; yet they could not draw his look to the wonderful work. Paul was not captured even by the glory of the Sabine Hills that rose in the fresh green of spring away to the right, and behind them the gigantic rampart of the Appennines.

His eyes travelled down the Way, stretched in front of him for twelve miles, straight and taut as a strung bow-line. For at the end, crowning her seven hills with marble temple and Imperial Palace, stood the Capital of the World, whose rule ranged from Jerusalem to Spain, and from Africa and across the Alps and the forests of Europe to the savage islands of Britain. Paul saw Rome.

Years before this day, he had written to his friends, "I must see Rome." For his far-seeing brain told him that, to capture Rome for his Christ, was to hold the key to the conquest of the whole world of his day. And what his eye saw his heart dared. He turned the stumbling-block of imprisonment into the stepping-stone of world-conquest when he said, "I appeal to

Cæsar." And now, when he came over the Alban Mount on the Appian Way, his burning ambition was realised.

His body was chained, but his mind flew along the road to Rome. Aquila or Mark, or one of the others who had come out to meet him, would point to the great Palace of the Cæsars on the hill that was the heart of Rome—the palaces that Augustus Tiberius and Caligula had built. Beyond the palaces, and above the valley where the Forum lay, stood out the Citadel of Rome on the Capitoline Hill.

The travellers passed the tombs of the son of Lars Porsena of Clusium, and of a hundred other great Romans; and the shining Temple of Hercules. Then they went down the slope of the hill and crossed the sacred stream of Almo, down which—the Roman legend said—the babies Romulus and Remus had floated in their wicker basket into the Tiber to the foot of the hill on which they founded Rome. At last, Paul passed under the new Arch of Drusus and was beneath the shadow of the very wall of Rome. His footsteps rang on the stones under the arch of the Capena gate. He was in Rome.

The multitudes of Rome thronged the streets. The crowds stood aside as Julius led his band of prisoners up the slope of the Cælian Hill to the Camp of the Foreign Legion. There was the clatter of arms, the salute, the words of explanation, and Paul was in the keeping of the Prætor,[1] the prisoner of the Emperor Nero.

[1] Prætor peregrinorum.

XXXVI

"MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD"

THE sharp rattle of armour fell upon the ears of Paul when he awoke next morning. Looking up he saw the Roman soldier who was to guard him. The spring sunlight coming through the doorway glinted on the guard's crested brazen helmet and on the breastplate and greaves, while the short broadsword with which the victories of Rome were won hung from a belt bound around the soldier's tunic.

As at Cæsarea so in Rome Paul was always to be guarded by a soldier. He was free, however, to live in his own hired house, though at every movement Paul was reminded by the clink of the chain on his wrist that he was a prisoner.

He awoke for the first time in the city of which he had dreamed for years, heard the hum of its busy streets, and, as he went out into the sunshine, saw the palace upon the hill from which the world was ruled. He went out to look at Rome that first day, perhaps to choose a house in which he would live. If so he probably passed the theatre of Marcellus and crossed the bridge of Fabricius[1] under which the sullen yellow Tiber ran, full of the rains of early spring. The middle of the bridge rested on an island.

Paul would see that many who passed and met him

[1] This bridge, still standing, is the oldest bridge in Rome.

as he crossed Fabricius' Bridge were of his own race. Over the river he found the Jewish quarter. He discovered his old friends Priscilla the Roman, with her Jewish husband, Aquila, possibly in the Jewish quarter, but more probably on the Aventine Hill, carrying on their and his handicraft as tent-makers.[1] Paul then rented his house possibly near that of his friends.

Three days later he sent word to the leading Jews saying that he would like to talk with them. They came to him and sat on the floor together, waiting for him to speak, with the wondering soldier listening, although he could understand little enough of what was going on. Probably Aristarchus was there and Luke, who recorded what he heard. Paul wished the men of his own race to know why he was a prisoner in Rome.

"Brothers," he began, "although I have done nothing against our people or our ancestral customs, I was handed over to the Romans as a prisoner from Jerusalem. They meant to release me after examination, as I was innocent of any crime that deserved death. But the Jews objected, and so I was obliged to appeal to Cæsar—not that I had any charge to bring against my own nation. This is my reason for asking to see you and have a word with you."

Then he lifted up his hand and shook the chain that dangled from his wrist.

"I am," he said, "wearing this chain because I share Israel's hope."

"We have had no letters about you from Judæa,"

[1] There is a tradition that Priscilla and Aquila lived on the Aventine Hill on the Roman side of the river.

they replied, "and no brother has come here with any bad report or story about you. We think it only right to let you tell your own story. But, as regards this sect of yours, we are well aware that there are objections to it on all hands."

Any letters that may have been written from Jerusalem to Rome about Paul may have gone down with the ship from Myra on the Malta coast. As there was not time to carry on any full discussion then and there, they arranged to come one morning and spend all day in discussion with Paul.

They fixed the day and came to his quarters in large numbers. Paul explained what the Reign of God meant, and tried to persuade them about Jesus from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets. Some were quite convinced by what Paul said; others argued. All day they talked, with intervals when they would take some dried fruit and bread together. At last the day was gone and the stars came out, but still they could not agree among themselves. Paul was weary and felt disappointed that here again his most difficult task was in dealing with the Jews themselves. As they were moving to leave the house he broke out into one last word.

"It was an apt word," he said, "that the Holy Spirit spoke by the prophet Isaiah to your fathers, when he said:

"'Go and tell this people,
You will hear and hear but never understand,
You will see and see and never perceive.
For the heart of this people is obtuse,
Their ears are heavy of hearing,

Their eyes they have closed,
Lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears,
Lest they understand with their heart and turn again, and
I cure them.'

"Be sure of this," he went on, "that this salvation of God has been sent to the Nations. They"—and his free hand pointed across Rome—"they will listen to it."

So the Jews went out; and Paul turned toward the men of many nations who lived in Rome, the men whom he saw as he walked in the streets and crossed the bridges and trod the Forum with his guard.

As he walked from his house Paul saw here a gang of slaves lurching along to lay bricks in a new building which Nero was placing on the side of the Palatine Hill; there a Greek merchant from Corinth hurrying by, his mind full of the prices of the fruit which he had just landed at the wharves. As he crossed the bridge Paul saw, by the Tiber, the ship-porters—negroes, Gauls, Britons, Belgians, Spaniards—running with bare feet to and fro across the gang-ways from the ships to the warehouses, with boxes of spices, dates, and raisins, crates of early oranges, jars of wine, sacks of wheat; marble slabs, cheeses, silks—the produce of the East and West all brought to the hub of the world.

He went through many narrow streets where the houses were huddled together and built of wood on brick foundations. In a corner he would see young fellows throwing dice, their eyes feverishly glaring at the tiny squares as they laid their stakes, heedless

of the throngs of people who lingered or hastened by. As Paul neared the Palatine Hill, on which the gorgeous palaces of the Emperor Nero stood, he would see here a Roman noble on his horse, there a swaying litter, carried on the shoulders of slaves; and as the breeze caught the silken curtains of the litter, and blew them aside, Paul would see the proud face and rich auburn hair of a high-born Roman lady.

Passing round the side of the Palatine Hill Paul's eyes looked down the splendid pavements of the Forum, the greatest glory of Rome, with its forest of gleaming columns, its mighty arches on which the story of the victories of the armies of Rome was carved, its cool colonnades whose marbles shimmered in the reflected light from the splashing fountains. Among the columns under the portico of a temple he would see groups of men discussing the rebellion of a distant frontier tribe, or the newest lecture by Seneca.

Farther on in the Forum he would see some young dandies of Rome lounging and discussing the latest scandal about the wild young emperor, while others gathered round some carved lines on the steps on which they were following a gambling game. Beyond these again, on his right, Paul saw a cloistered place within which was a beautiful pool of water; and beside the cloister stood a circular temple from the centre of whose pointed roof a thin trail of smoke rose and lazily drifted away. These lovely buildings were the temple and cloisters of the Vestal Virgins, who tended the sacred fire which burned perpetually through the centuries.

In that same Forum he saw a pillar like a shaft of sunshine. It was covered entirely with gold. From that pillar, along the arrow-straight Roman roads, men measured their distance from Rome, whether they lived in Damascus or Chester, on the Nile, or the Euphrates, the Danube or the Seine; or dwelt at the Pillars of Hercules or upon the shores of the Hellespont.

It was in this Rome of golden palaces and festering slums, of free bread and circuses, gladiator fights and wild beast shows, this Imperial Eternal City whose strong rule, sometimes tyrannous but generally just, made the whole Mediterranean its lake, that Paul lived out his days for two years, unmolested and unhindered as he spoke and wrote in his home or among the soldiers.

The months went by, but Paul's trial was not held. The distance to Jerusalem and Cæsarea for getting evidence was great, and in any case the law moved slowly. Paul's name went through the city. Men and women came to him from the very house of Cæsar himself to learn of the Way. But there also came to him the common people—and slaves. They were all equal before him.

Beside the Romans and the slaves whom he saw, Paul had about him some of his best friends—Luke and Aristarchus, who had come with him from Cæsarea; Timothy who had rejoined him from the shores of the Ægean; John Mark, from whom he had parted so many years before, and who was now a

close friend; Epaphras, a fellow-prisoner, and new friends like young Demas.

One day Paul was delighted, as the door of his house was darkened by the entrance of a man, to look into the face of his old friend Epaphroditus. He had come right along the Egnatian Way from Philippi, across the Adriatic Sea from Dyrrachium to Brundisium, and thence along the Appian Way to Rome. Epaphroditus carried with him a bag with a gift from the friends in Philippi to Paul, who was full of joy, not only at seeing his friend and receiving the gift, but at knowing that the Brothers in Philippi, so far from forgetting him, still loved him and longed to see him.

But Epaphroditus fell ill in Rome so that Paul was afraid that he would die. However he recovered, and Paul, when Epaphroditus was well, began to dictate a letter to the people at Philippi, which Timothy sat and wrote out with his reed pen on the long roll of papyrus.

"Through the whole prætorian guard," said Paul, "and everywhere else it is recognised that I am a prisoner on account of my connection with Christ. . . The outcome of all this I know will be my release . . . My eager desire and hope is that I may never feel ashamed, but that now as ever I may do honour to Christ in my own person by fearless courage! . . . Stand firm in a common spirit, fighting side by side like one man for the faith of the Gospel. Never be scared for a second by your opponents."

Then he talks to them about Epaphroditus, who is going to carry this letter back to Philippi.

"Epaphroditus is my brother, my fellow-worker, my fellow-soldier, and your messenger to meet my wants," writes Paul. "I think it necessary to send him at once, for he has been yearning for you all. He has been greatly concerned because you heard he was ill. And he *was* ill, nearly dead with illness. . . . So I am especially eager to send him, that you may be glad when you see him again. . . . Value men like that, for he nearly died in the service of Christ by risking his life to get to me."

And he ends up the letter:

"The brothers beside me salute you. All the saints salute you, especially those of the Imperial household."

So though Paul was chained, the fetters could not tether his free spirit. He sent across the seas, to the men whom he loved, words that no executioner could kill and no persecution stamp out. His pen was mightier than even Rome's sword.

Paul greatly wished to help his old friends across the Ægean Sea in Ephesus, as well as those whom he had never seen up the Lycus Valley at Colossæ and at Laodicea. So he dictated letters to those two[1] places also, possibly even before that to the church of Philippi. The letters were alike in some parts; but other parts were different, so that the words would help the people who read them in their special difficulties. He also sent to a friend in Colossæ one of the most beautiful and human—as well as humorous—letters that he ever wrote. It was to plead for a young runaway slave who had come to Paul.

[1] "Ephesians" was probably a circular or "open" letter for his Asian churches.

Onesimus had run away from his master, Philemon, of Colossæ. He had stolen some of his master's goods. When Onesimus reached Rome, by some strange circumstance, he met Paul. His whole life was changed. Paul led the slave Onesimus into a wonderful freedom, the liberty of the Reign of God which Jesus Christ came to bring. He now felt sure that he ought to go back and ask his master's forgiveness; yet he trembled at the idea, for Philemon would have the power and the right even to break his legs as a punishment. It was decided that Onesimus was to go back to his master and take his chance. Paul, fortunately, knew Philemon of Colossæ as one of the men who had become a Christian. So he wrote to him.

"As Paul, the old man, who nowadays is a prisoner for Jesus Christ, I appeal to you on behalf of my spiritual son, born while I was in prison. It is Onesimus![1] Once you found him a worthless character, but nowadays he is worth something to you and to me. I am sending him back to you and parting with my very heart.

"Perhaps this was why you and he were parted for a while, that you might get him back for good, no longer a mere slave, but something more than a slave—a beloved brother; especially dear to me, but how much more to you as a man and as a Christian. . . .

"If he has cheated you of any money, or owes you any sum, put that down to my account."

[1] Meaning "useful." In the following sentence Paul humorously plays on the idea that he has made Onesimus live up to his name.

At this point Paul took the reed from the hand of Timothy who was writing the letter and wrote down, "'This is my own handwriting: I, Paul, promise to refund it.'"

This made it a legally binding document. But he goes on, "Not to mention that you owe me, over and above, your very soul!"

So Paul pleads for poor Onesimus, who in company with Tychicus is to go across the seas back to Colossæ. Paul himself was hoping to be freed soon, for he writes at the end of the letter to Philemon: "Get quarters ready for me, for I am hoping that by your prayers I shall be restored to you."

At last all these letters for the Lycus Valley were written and signed, rolled up and sewn for safety into their canvas cases. Paul's friend, Tychicus, proud to be chosen for the difficult and glorious task of carrying the words of the apostle across the seas, had his wallet full of food, his bottle hanging by his side, and in his pouch the passage money for the ships. With Onesimus beside him, Tychicus would kneel for the blessing of Paul and a last prayer for their journeying. They then left the house for their pilgrimage. As they turned to take their last look at Paul, he would wave a hand to them, and as he did so they saw the glint of the fetter that bound him a prisoner of Nero, an heroic "ambassador in chains."

Tychicus and Onesimus, descending the Aventine Hill, past the Circus Maximus, took the right branch where the Ways forked. Leaving the Latin Way on their left, they went striding down the Appian Way and up the hill, then along the leagues of splendid road,

with the aqueduct on their left, the glorious purple Alban Mount ahead, and the clear sharpness of the morning like wine in their veins. Refusing the Puteoli road on their right, they sped along the Way that led to Brundisium, whence a ship would bear them across the Adriatic, down the sparkling Corinth Gulf, and again from Cenchreæ past Athens and over the Sea of Islands to Ephesus. So they passed on, leaving, maybe, one letter at Ephesus, and bearing the other precious rolls on up the Lycus Valley to Colossæ.

As trembling Onesimus stood with bowed head in the marble courtyard, while his master Philemon and the gentle lady Apphia read the letter from Paul, the faces of the master and mistress would grow less stern toward their runaway slave. They would forgive him, because he was indeed sorry and had of his free will come back to serve them. He was no longer the sullen slave who did not live up to the meaning of his name, Onesimus, but the glad slave of Christ and therefore a happy servant to his master—a real "helpful" at last!

As Tychicus went out smiling with joy at this happy picture that he would have to tell Paul about when he returned, he would grasp the remaining Colossæ roll and go down to deliver it to the elders of the church. It would be read aloud in one of the homes where the Brothers met, perhaps in that of Philemon himself. They would hear the straight, strong words of Paul.

"Away with anger, rage, malice, slander, foul talk. Tell no lies to one another. You have stripped off the old nature with its behaviour and put on the new

nature, which is renewed in the likeness of its Creator for the Knowledge of Him. In it there is no room for Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free man; Christ is everything and everywhere."

They would need to remember that last sentence when they heard Paul's words saying that the runaway slave Onesimus was "one of themselves."

"Tychicus, that beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow-servant in the Lord, will give you all information about me," Paul wrote. "The reason why I am sending him to you is that he may find out how you are and encourage your hearts. He is accompanied by that faithful and beloved brother, Onesimus, who is one of yourselves. They will tell you of all that goes on here in Rome."

Tychicus would tell them how Paul lived in Rome, a prisoner chained to a soldier, yet still the great, radiant, heroic Paul. Then they would crowd round Tychicus to see the words at the end of the scroll in a different handwriting.

"This salutation is in my own hand, from Paul. Remember I am in prison. Grace be with you."

EPILOGUE

MORE THAN CONQUEROR

"REMEMBER I am in prison." . . .

The rest of Paul's life is a silence and his death is darkness, where the whispers and the swift gleams of light only make the silence deeper and the darkness more impenetrable.

We know that as the shadows deepened the dauntless hero became more and more lonely—a solitary heroic figure in the darkness before the dawn.

Paul's friends left him. Demas, the young companion who promised so finely, had seen the glitter and the pomp of the world, and could not see the glory of the chained hero; so Demas (Paul sadly wrote) "in his love for this world has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica." One friend, Crescens, was sent on an errand to Gaul; Titus had crossed the Adriatic to Dalmatia. Only Luke, the loved physician, still stood at Paul's side. They were comrades to the end.

What happened in the darkness? Was Paul tried and declared innocent, set free for a little while to go out again on the highway of his adventure for God; only to come back to face more dreadful charges under the judgment of that monstrous creature, Nero? Or was he condemned at the end of the two years named

in Acts? In any case the time came when, as an ancient tradition that bears upon it the stamp of truth declares, he walked out with firm step along the path of death to the place of the Three Fountains; and there laid his head upon the block, while the sword of the Roman executioner ended that dauntless life.

Silence and dense darkness are over it all. Yet out of the prison, out of the silence and the darkness, comes a Voice.

It is the voice of the hero who, trembling and astonished, had long years before laid down the flail of the persecutor at the feet of his risen Lord on the road to Damascus, and had in that hour begun to run the course of his great adventure; a course that had carried him up the steep ascent over mountain pass and by robber den, under blazing sun and through blinding blizzard, travelling on in peril from city to city across the Empire, often without food and in rags, labouring with his own hands, tossed on the sea and shipwrecked, stoned by the Jews, beaten with Roman rods and torn with scourges, chained, imprisoned and at last led out to his death, yet unafraid to the end. And that valiant Voice out of the darkness rings triumphantly across the centuries:

I HAVE FOUGHT THE GOOD FIGHT;
I HAVE RUN MY COURSE;
I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH.

Nor did Paul carry his secret away with him. He throws open the door and reveals the hidden source of all his strength and courage. For, he says,

WE ARE MORE THAN CONQUERORS THROUGH HIM THAT LOVED US.

FOR I AM CERTAIN

NEITHER DEATH NOR LIFE,

NEITHER ANGELS NOR PRINCIPALITIES,

NEITHER THE PRESENT NOR THE FUTURE,

NO POWERS OF THE HEIGHT OR OF THE DEPTH,

NOR ANYTHING ELSE IN ALL CREATION

WILL BE ABLE TO PART US

FROM GOD'S LOVE

IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE LIFE OF PAUL

Adapted by kind permission of Sir William Ramsay.

	A.D.
Entrance on public life (in his thirtieth year)	30 or 31
Events culminating in the death of Stephen	30-33
JOURNEY TO DAMASCUS AND CONVERSION	year ending Sept. 33
Retirement into Arabia	34
First visit to Jerusalem	35
Residence in Tarsus, etc.	35–43
Caligula succeeds Tiberius	37
Claudius succeeds Caligula	41
Barnabas brings Saul to Antioch	43
The Prophecy of Agabus	early in 44
The famine in Jerusalem begins with failure of harvest	45
Second visit to Jerusalem	winter 45–46
Return to Antioch	" 46–47
FIRST JOURNEY ORDERED	not later than Passover, 29 March 47
In Cyprus	till July 47
In Pamphylia	July 47
In Pisidian Antioch	till winter of 47
In Iconium	till summer of 48
In Lystra	till autumn of 48
In Derbe	winter 48–49
Return by stages through Lystra, Iconium, Antioch, and across Pisidia	Feb.–May 49
Short stay in Perga	June–July 49

Return by Attalia to Syrian Antioch .	August 49
Third visit to Jerusalem: the Council	winter 49–50
Caractacus taken to Rome . .	50
SECOND JOURNEY BEGINS . . .	after the feast, 25 March to 1 April 50
In Galatia	summer 50
Across Asia to Troas	about Oct. 50
In Philippi	till about Dec. 50
In Thessalonica	Dec. 50–May 51
In Berœa	May–July 51
In Athens	August 51
In Corinth. Thessalonian Epistles, and perhaps Galatians . . .	Sept. 51–March 53
Arrival of Gallio	July 52
Fourth visit to Jerusalem .	at the feast, 22–29 March 53
Short visit to Syrian Antioch: Epistle to Galatians possibly written at this time	May 53
THIRD JOURNEY BEGINS	about June 53
In Galatia	July and Aug. 53
Nero succeeds Claudius . . .	54
In Ephesus	Oct. 53–Jan. 56
Wrote first Letter to Corinthians .	about Oct. 55
In Troas	Feb. 56
In Macedonia	till late autumn 56
Wrote second Letter to Corinthians	summer 56
In Achaia three months	Dec. 56–Feb. 57
Journey to Philippi	March 57
Start from Philippi for Troas on the way to Jerusalem	15 April 57
Fifth visit to Jerusalem . . .	(day before) Pentecost, 28 May 57
IMPRISONMENT IN CÆSAREA . . .	June 57–July 59
Nero murders his mother, Agrippina	59

VOYAGE TO ROME	Aug. 59–Feb. 60
In Rome.	until end of 61
Boadicea's rebellion in Britain . .	61
Wrote Letters to Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians and Philippians . .	60–61
[1] Trial and acquittal	end of 61
[1] Later travels. Wrote first Letter to Timothy and Letter to Titus .	62–66
Great fire at Rome and persecution of Christians	64
[1] Second trial. Wrote second Letter to Timothy. Martyrdom . .	67

[1] These dates and the whole history of Paul's trial, and possible acquittal, and later travels, and of his martyrdom are highly conjectural.

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[1] The quotations in this life of Paul are largely taken from this translation by kind permission of the author and the publishers.

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